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SUMMARY OF NEWS.

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Politics of Europe.

No Arrivals from Sea being reported yesterday, we have given the greater portion of our present Number to the first day's Debate on the Manchester Outrage, from the *Times* of the 16th of May, in continuation of the Report of Petitions presented to the House on this subject, given in our Paper of yesterday.

The leading articles of the *Times*, from the 1st to the 17th of May, having been already printed, we have occupied the few pages not required for the Debate, by the leading articles of the *Morning Chronicle* from the 1st of May, onward as far as they extend; and subsequent to them, of the *True Briton*, *Englishman*, *Scotsman*, and *Examiner*, distinguishing each by the name of the Paper at the end of the article quoted.

The Debate on the Proceedings of the 16th of August 1819 will be read with deep interest, and we believe with feelings of shame, indignation, and regret, by all who retain even a remnant of the genuine feelings of Englishmen; whether they consider the perpetrators of the outrage, or the victims to their fury, who were equally their countrymen, or reflect on the inefficiency of the boasted Laws and Constitution of the country, which, though appealed to for redress, have afforded none for what was undoubtedly a flagrant violation of both one and the other. After considering all that has been published, in a trust-worthy shape, respecting these disgraceful proceedings, every unprejudiced mind must be impressed with the conviction, that the Meeting was assembled for a Constitutional object, and that it was peaceable and orderly till it was attacked and dispersed by the Yeomanry, in a manner that deserves no softer terms than cruel and brutal.

Two questions that have been principally agitated are—1st. Whether or not the Meeting was legal?—and 2nd. Whether or not, supposing it illegal, the manner in which it was dispersed, was legal and justifiable? If we were to consider all the circumstances, collateral or cotemporay, that have been heaped together and unfairly mixed up with this question, in order to prove the Meeting to be illegal,—the Meetings that took place in one quarter, the resolutions that were passed in another, the drillings in a third place, the rumors in a fourth, this man's hopes, and that man's fears,—we should have to go over a field far too wide for our limits. But happily such a course is quite unnecessary.

If the Manchester Meeting had not been assembled for a legal object, the Magistrates would, as in duty bound, have given previous notice that it was illegal, as they had done of a Meeting announced a few days before, and which did not take place, because of such notice from the Magistrates. As no such notice was given respecting the Meeting on the 16th, the Public had a right to conclude that this Meeting was considered legal, and to rely on the protection of the laws in attending it. They could not imagine that in attending a Meeting sanctioned by the permission of the Magistrates, they were to be exposed to indiscriminate massacre: that they would be set on, sword in hand, by an armed body of their own countrymen. The people met to exercise a Constitutional right, to express their opinion of the necessity of a Reform in Parliament. They knew well how much Petitions on this subject were neglected; how they are represented as coming from a few insignificant individuals; how the petitioners are described as a *vulgar* and ignorant rabble, who are not to be considered as capable of judging on such subjects, or as expressing the sentiments of the *great body* of the people. They there-

fore resolved to meet in such numbers that their opinions could not be considered insignificant, and to assemble and conduct themselves in such an orderly manner that they could no longer be characterised as a rabble. These circumstances, instead of gaining them the merit and consideration they reasonably expected, are made the chief ground of charge against them. For the ministerial partisans are like an insect whose sting is less fatal than theirs, which can extract venom from the sweetest flowers.

The order they observed was called "military array" and their numbers were said to excite just alarm. As to the pretence of danger, how absurd it is to suppose for a moment, that men intending to engage in any desperate act would bring along with them those whose safety was most dear to them—their wives and daughters. And again, how absurd it is to pretend that a multitude would go forth, unarmed, for the purpose of perpetrating an outrage, with the view of effecting their object by military tactics? Yet the numbers, which were indicative only of the general feeling of the country, and this nicknamed "military array," and some flags and inscriptions which a few thoughtless or imprudent, or insidious individuals might have devised, are brought forward to justify so gross an outrage! It seems fully confessed indeed by the Debating Members on each side of the House of Commons, that the Meeting, instead of being riotous, was orderly and peaceable, nay even too orderly! So much for the legality of the Meeting.

If the Magistrates were really and truly impressed with a conviction, that the Meeting when so assembled, was illegal, and that it was their duty to disperse it; yet their greatest apologist must admit that reason, humanity, and justice would have prompted them to disperse it in a legal manner, so as to secure the public peace, if they thought it endangered, with the least possible effusion of blood. They might have given the multitude fair warning by reading the Riot Act in the most open and public manner, and affording them time to disperse as provided by law. They could apprehend no immediate danger while the Meeting continued peaceable and orderly, and while they had a strong body of armed men at hand. They might have allowed a few of the more helpless individuals to escape,—the aged and the infirm, the mother and her tender infant,—before they let loose the military upon the promiscuous groups. All were not surely alike guilty and deserving to be cut and trampled down:—there might be a few (more than were in Sodom) well intentioned, loyal, and harmless individuals, whom curiosity, or a sincere wish for the good of their country, had drawn thither; and who would have departed the moment they were told the Meeting was illegal. But the Manchester Magistrates seem to have been too much devoted to the service of ministers to listen to the suggestions of pity. They seem to have been eager to pounce immediately upon their prey lest it should escape out of their hands. They had the people secured within walls, and the outlets guarded by a body of military: such an opportunity was not to be lost; and in these circumstances, the Yeomanry were authorised to tread down, slaughter, or disperse a defenceless, peaceable, and unarmed multitude!

Taking the most favourable view of the conduct of the magistrates, they seem to have acted according to a preconceived plan, devised by ministers, to draw the people into a snare. The only motive for arresting Hunt in the midst of such a multitude, of whose sentiments he was supposed to be the oracle, must

have been to excite a riot, and thus create a decent pretence for dispersing the Meeting. A person called Harrison was arrested in similar circumstances sometime before; but, from the temper and good sense of that Meeting, without the desired effect. But at Manchester the Magistrates did not stand upon ceremonies, and seemed resolved to have recourse to force with or without a cause. They seemed resolved, by a bold stroke, to intimidate the people from exercising any longer the last sad privilege of the wretched, the privilege of complaining. Hunt and Harrison too could have been arrested *after* the Meetings quite as well; but that would not have answered the purpose of creating a pretence for the interference of the military.

The last feature of this affair is worse than all put together. It is comparatively little to us that Magistrates of Manchester are ready tools of Ministers, and willing in order to serve their patrons to violate the laws; it is comparatively little whether or not the Manchester Yeomanry Cavalry are regardless of the rights of their countrymen, and dead to the common feelings of humanity. Even the English blood that day shed by Englishmen is comparatively unimportant, compared with the awful fact, that the British House of Commons, as a body, has no longer any sympathy with the people. Sir Francis Burdett's motion having unequivocally demonstrated this fact, we may safely say that the most valuable part of the British Constitution is no more. When a conviction has once gone abroad throughout the nation (and what can prevent it?) that the people can no longer look to the House of Commons as the guardian and protector of their rights and interests, and that they have thus no constitutional protector, the great strength of the Government, the support of Public Opinion is taken away, and it is then really, if not formally, a mere Government of force, and liable to all the infirmities of such a Government.

London, May 1, 1821.—By yesterday's Mail we learn, that the Pasha of the Morea, who had received orders to proceed against Ali Pasha, has had these orders countermanded—and it is added, that the Porte has entered into negotiation with Ali—so much do the Turks feel themselves pushed on every side. The Russian Minister at Constantinople has given an assurance in the name of the Emperor, that he takes no part in the Greek insurrection; but the Porte are unwilling to give credit to this declaration. They affect to say, that they have discovered the secret preparations made for the revolt; and that the Russians are only incensed that it burst forth before the time agreed on.

A Lisbon packet arrived yesterday, with advices to the 23d ultimo. The dispatches from the new Government of Bahia, addressed to the Regency and Cortes, and containing the whole of the details of the revolution there, had been received and read in the Cortes. The particulars of this event we published on Saturday, but we had then no idea that our predictions would have been so soon fulfilled. Accounts had also reached Lisbon of the Declaration of Pernambuco to adhere to the Portuguese Cortes and Constitution, on exactly the same plan which had been adopted at Bahia, as will be seen from our extracts. Thus the constitutional principles spread rapidly in the Brazils; and we may expect to hear of them being next displayed in Rio de Janeiro, where the King's Army and Guards are chiefly Europeans, the very people who are disposed and pledged to their adoption. We hope and trust these events will tear the bandage from the eyes of the King, and teach him the true policy he ought to follow.—*Morning Chronicle*.

London, May 2, 1821.—The report is still prevalent at Paris that Russia means to march a large army into Spain, though the steadiness of the French Funds would hardly seem to warrant the belief in a Secret Treaty for the passage of this army through France. Letters from Petersburg confidently announce most extensive military preparations; though it is conjectured by many that their destination is Turkey, and not Spain. The fall of the rate of Exchange is appealed to as an evidence of the apprehensions entertained on this subject.

Our readers will see from the Lisbon Papers, that the Cortes are profiting by the lesson afforded them by the Neapolitan

Revolution, and adopting measures for displacing all those Magistrates who are inimical to the new order of things, and thwart the Government in the steps they are taking for the public good. It is well observed by one of our contemporaries, "that in all great changes, such as that in Portugal, decisive, energetic measures, followed out with determination, are the best for all parties."—*Morning Chronicle*.

London, May 3, 1821.—Ever since Naples and Piedmont have been under military occupation, and foreign influence gained the ascendancy over the other states, nothing is allowed to appear in the Journals except so much as seems good to the Austrian authorities; and even letters committed to the post are frequently intercepted. We are not therefore surprised at the paucity of news from the Italian peninsula. Letters from Genoa of the 19th, mention that the military commission, composed wholly of individuals notorious for their ultra-loyal principles, had commenced its sanguinary labours, and condemned twelve of the principal members of the provisional government to death; but fortunately the intended victims had previously effected their escape, and sailed with a fair wind for Spain. Had the Austrians persisted in their intention of entering Genoa, the scene would certainly have been dreadful. Victor Emmanuel has positively refused to resume the sceptre. The Universities of Turin and Genoa will, it is understood, be abolished, Spain invaded, and Genoa held in military occupation. The advices from Rome are to the 15th. In compliance with the Papal Edict just promulgated for the extirpation of the *Carbonari*, the police, assisted by a host of spies and informers, had commenced their operations with extraordinary zeal and activity, and several arrests on suspicion had been effected in the capital and its immediate vicinity. The members of this association are not numerous in Rome; but they abound in the Northern provinces, where the Police and their myrmidons, stimulated no doubt by the magnitude of the proffered reward, will reap an abundant harvest. The Court of Rome, ever hostile to civil and religious liberty, is wholly devoted to the projects of the Holy Alliance. Cardinal Ruffo, whose exploits are already recorded in blood in the annals of Naples, has been sent to that city, in quality of member of a special commission for settling the affairs of the kingdom. From the ultra-loyal and ultra-legitimate principles of the individuals to whom the management of the affairs of Naples is to be confided *ad interim*, it is obvious that the old despotism will be restored, with superadded powers to repress any future effort that may be made by the people to shake off the yoke, and to establish a constitutional government. The Members of the Parliament, who still considered themselves as possessing the right to discuss public affairs, notwithstanding the prohibition of Austria, had taken up their residence in Higher Calabria; but reports state that the Austrians have dislodged them. The King, after passing the holy week at Rome, was expected to set out for Naples.—*True Briton*.

Edinburgh, May 5, 1821.—It has been officially announced, in the Vienna Court Gazette, that the Board of Despots congregated at Laybach is to continue its sittings; and it is significantly added, that "it is possible THE AFFAIRS OF SPAIN MAY NOT BE FOREIGN TO THE ASSEMBLY." We are quite certain they will not. No individual in the least acquainted with the views and principles of the members of the Confederacy of Despots could be silly enough to imagine that they would content themselves with putting down freedom in Naples. They attacked Italy, not because they had any thing to apprehend from the efforts of the base, degenerate progeny of the ancient Romans, but to establish a precedent of universal application. And since the other powers permitted Alexander and Francis to violate every principle of public law, by subverting the free constitution of an independent state, upon what principle can they interfere to prevent them attacking Spain, England, or the United States? The Holy Alliance was not organised for the support of Ferdinand of Naples, or of any one despot in particular; but as a shield and protection for the whole breed. It is not so much in defence of Kings as individuals, as in defence of "the right divine of kings to govern wrong," that they have marshalled their hordes of Huns and Muscovites. It is against freedom in general, and not against the Carbonari of

Italy, the Illuminati of Germany, or the Liberales of Spain that they have declared interminable war. They feel that the existence of a single free state is incompatible with the full development of what they term the *monarchical principle*.—The greater security of property in free states, and the more rapid progress which they have uniformly made in civilization, and in the accumulation of wealth, cannot fail to arrest the attention even of the most callous and passive of the slaves of despotic power. Nor is it possible to guard against the contagious effect of such an example otherwise than by extirpating it. So long as men have a standard by which to judge of the comparative merit of the institutions under which they live, so long as the mirror of freedom is held up to reflect the miserable condition of those who, like Russian boors, are driven on perpetually in the same track, with their powers fettered, and some of the noblest springs of action in human nature rendered useless within them—and so long as there are any examples of successful and glorious resistance to tyranny and oppression for them to emulate—the fabric of despotism can never be deemed secure, and the Autocrats must act with a moderation and caution, which cannot fail to appear to them as a most grievous and intolerable restraint.

It would be absurd to doubt that the Holy Leaguers will endeavour to relieve themselves from the operation of this check. But their want of naval power, and the distance of the American Republic, renders her secure against their utmost malice: and the many substantial advantages they have derived from the ready and *needful* assistance afforded them by England, will most probably induce them to consider us rather in the light of friends than as foes. Spain has no such securities. She is situated in their immediate neighbourhood—her Cortes are really elected by the people—and she has afforded one of the most recent and memorable examples of the facility with which tyranny may be cast down. How is it possible that, with all these mortal offences on her head, she can escape the visitation of the Holy Allies? There is, to be sure, a wide difference between Spain and Italy. It will not be quite so easy a matter to march to Madrid as to Naples. The Spaniards are as brave as the Italians are cowardly. The divisions which unfortunately subsist among them must indeed give a very great advantage to their enemies; but the Cortes have adopted the measures best calculated to bring them to a speedy termination. It was obviously in vain for them to attempt to conciliate the support of the priests. The latter must have felt that the existence of their ancient power and influence would cease with the complete ascendancy of the constitutional regime, and they were, therefore, of necessity, its most decided enemies. Had the mass of the people been sufficiently instructed, their efforts might have been safely despised; but, in a country like Spain, sunk in the lowest abyss of ignorance, they required to be vigorously and promptly counteracted. The Cortes have hitherto displayed too much forbearance on this point. But the recent banishment of a considerable number of the leading ecclesiastics to Minorca, appears to indicate that they have renounced that temporizing policy which in their situation could not fail to be destructive.

The Cortes have also resolved to put the country into an attitude of defence, and for this purpose they have decreed a levy of 500,000 men, to be divided into four armies, and the appointment of a Commission of five members to act with the ministry during the war. As soon as hostilities commence, the political chiefs are to have a dictatorial power, and endeavours to overturn the Constitution are to be tried by a military commission, of which the sentence is to be carried into execution within 24 hours, if approved of by the political chief,

Some of these enactments are extremely severe; and it is not improbable that the Spanish Revolution, which has hitherto proceeded so peaceably, may yet be characterised by acts of violence and blood. But for these the Holy Leaguers will be accountable. It is they who have proscribed the Spanish Constitution,—it is they who encourage the partisans of the atrocious despotism from which Spain has been relieved,—and consequently it is they who have rendered the adoption of harsh measures by the

Cortes not a matter of choice but of necessity. The confederacy of despots have done every thing in their power to exasperate and outrage all the feelings of the Spanish people; and we must not be surprised should they in a moment of irritation execute summary and immediate vengeance on those who are suspected of being favourable to their views. The confederacy of 1792 was the cause of all the horrors and proscriptions which accompanied the French revolution. And if the confederacy of 1821 be not productive of similar outrages in Spain, it will be entirely owing to the greater patience and forbearance of the people.—*Scotsman*.

London, May 6, 1821.—The debate of Friday night in the House of Commons may be considered nearly conclusive against the existence of any design on the part of the Allied Powers to march troops into Spain. Many have supposed that the statements of the Marquis of Londonderry were not so precise and so satisfactory as they might have been, with the aid of his Lordship's sources of information, but that arose, we apprehend, from the nature of the question, and the unofficial form in which it may be said to exist with regard to this country. If, therefore, some divisions of the Russian army are still advancing towards the South, which is asserted to be the fact, by the concurrent testimony of the continental journals and private letters, their march must be with some other object. Among the diplomatic circles it is asserted, that it has reference solely to the jealousy that might be entertained by the other continental Powers, of the military occupation, by Austria, of the whole of Piedmont, as well as Naples, and that it is to unite in that occupation that the Russian troops are destined. His Imperial Majesty may, also, have a view to the indemnity to which he may consider himself entitled, by maintaining his troops, for some months, at the expence of those countries which have solicited his assistance. Our original statement that the Russian army had received orders to halt, has been confirmed by advices from St. Petersburg, where the intelligence produced an improvement in the exchange of nearly four per cent. That subsequent orders have been issued directing a few of the regiments of which it was composed to proceed to the South for the purpose above-mentioned, is extremely probable, but that does not, of course, affect the main question, regarding the existence of a design to interfere in the affairs of Spain.

The Funds.—The state of the market looks favourably for a rise, and the prices have, in fact, undergone an improvement since our last. A few bold speculators are alone wanted to put the funds in motion, and give activity to the operations: but they are deterred more by the prospect of diminutive profits than by the apprehension of actual loss. The regular consumption of stock by the Sinking Fund and the public is the only cause which can at present be said to be at work. A large purchase, amounting to 120,000*l.* in Consols, was made on Thursday for the Court of Chancery, and produced a rise in the stock of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. But little business was transacted yesterday, and the market closed at 73 $\frac{1}{2}$ (buyers) in Consols for the account. Some bargains have been done for the opening of the books in July at 73 $\frac{1}{2}$, which is a rate of continuation of about 6 per cent. a circumstance rather unusual of late, and particularly so at a time when commercial discounts are currently effected at 4 per cent.

Foreign Stock.—French stock has been equally steady in value with the funds of this country. We have no later price from Paris than that of Monday, when the *rentes* closed at 82*fr.* 25*c.* During the three following days it was supposed little business would be transacted, on account of the *fêtes* in celebration of the baptism of the young Duke de Bourdeaux. The principal dealers in French stock on the Exchange of London decline selling below 82*fr.* 65*c.* with 25*fr.* 65*c.* for the rate of exchange. Spanish bonds are now quoted without the dividend, which has been paid in London in the manner proposed by the new arrangement. The current price is 54. Columbian bonds are in some request, at 35 per cent. Speculation seems to have arisen in them on the same principle as in a lottery, since the loss can only be a small one, and the gain, if either the interest is remitted, or the bonds liquidated at *par*, must be on a large scale.

We have seen a private letter from Vienna, dated the 18th ultimo, which contains the following passage:—

"When the tide of success against the Neapolitans and the Piedmontese was at the highest, there is no doubt that the question was started in the Congress of Laybach, whether the Allies after the completion of their operations in Italy, should transfer their conquering armies to Spain, and that the affirmative side of it was taken both by Austria and Russia. The disposition was checked, however, by an absolute refusal on the part of France to suffer the troops to pass through."—*Englishman*

London, May 13.—A private letter from Paris mentions a curious occurrence at the French Court. When the Duke de Cazes was presented among others to the King, the Duchess de Berri shrieked at the announcement of his name. She then quitted the room, declaring that nothing could induce her to remain in the presence of the "murderer of her husband." This unhappy woman, it would seem, really believes the insane charge made in the Chamber of Peers, by some raving Ultras, against the Ex-Minister, when Louvel assassinated the Duke de Berri. Most people believed at the time, that the accusers only meant, that De Cazes was *politically* accessory to the crime. For the unfortunate widow of the victim, every allowance is of course to be made; but is this the class of beings by whom a great nation like the French will submit to be governed, after the death of the more prudent Bourbon now on the Throne? We always believed it to be morally impossible; and we think these symptoms of incurable bigotry and intolerance will only ensure a crisis the moment that Louis expires.

The Greek Insurrection has not been yet marked with any thing more than the note of preparation; but every account indicates a long and bloody contest. The Insurgents have made a triumphal entry into Bucharest, and an union has taken place between the leaders Ypsilanti and Theodore. Their forces have encamped on the banks of the Danube, and are estimated in one account at 60,000 men. The enthusiasm of the population is very great: a stronger proof of it could not well be given, than the willing consent of the abbots, and the most religious class of people, to an order for casting cannon out of the bells of the churches and monasteries. The Sublime Porte, too, seems much alarmed, if it is true that it issued an order for putting to death the principal Greeks in Constantinople, which was only suspended on the remonstrance of the Russian Ambassador.

The real intentions of the Laybach Confederates towards all Europe are daily manifesting themselves in the most unequivocal manner. The present week has supplied two or three facts of this edifying nature. An article from Wirtemberg states, that the Austrian Envoy has repeatedly urged the suppression of a liberal paper, called the *Neckar Gazette*; and that it is feared, if Russia seconds the solicitation, that the Constitutional Government of that small kingdom must submit to so monstrous and insolent a dictation. A more open and shameless interference on the part of a despot with national rights and individual liberty, we never heard of. Yet this is one of the absolute monarchs whom English Ministers can, in an English Parliament, laud without blushing for their philanthropy and manifold kingly virtues!—At Naples, the *Police* has taken upon itself to issue an order for the slaughter of General William Pepe whenever he shall return to Naples, he "having been *notoriously* guilty of high treason!" Thus one of the first acts of the restored government of "social order," is openly to violate the Convention of Capua, (by which full indemnity for the past was agreed upon) to allow the police to decide in the last resort, and to denounce a brave man before trial, upon declaring him to be "*notoriously* guilty!"

We turn with pleasure from the contemplation of these legitimate atrocities, to the gratifying intelligence of the consummation of the Brazilian Revolution at Rio Janeiro. There is something peculiarly consoling to Reformers all over the world in the manner of this quiet and dignified change. There were no previous circumstances which the ingenuity of corruption could distort into incitements for mere change. In the kingdom of

Brazil, there was no free press, there were no popular meetings, no open-air orators. The transition from a despotic government to a Constitutional one was brought about by the experience of the evils of the former, a calm and general conviction of the blessings of the latter, and by the example of the glorious and bloodless Revolutions in Spain and Portugal. The military indeed were the chief agents in the change, which however, so far from deteriorating from its value, only proves that the feeling in the nation was extensive enough to include even the educated and paid servants of the Monarch.

The Parliamentary proceedings have considerable interest this week, both serious and comic. The House of Commons has chiefly amused itself with a case of the all-comprehensive nature of "breach of privilege." Mr. Bennet complained of slander in a wretched paper (*John Bull*), which has been set up as the vehicle of the dirty malice of a certain part of the "higher orders" against their political opponents. It was a desperate experiment for the purpose of retaliating on private character the blows which the authors had publicly received from various spirited Senators; and it reckoned for support on the appetite for scandal which distinguishes the frequenters of fashionable parties. With regard to the particular offence now under notice, it was very proper in Mr. Bennet to bring it forward in the House in a way that ensured its public reprobation; and the examination of the parties concerned has been useful in many ways. But any further proceeding we think unjust and degrading. It is not the business of the House of Commons to order prosecutions for private libels; and as to calling it a "breach of privilege," if this slanderous falsehood is one, so is every thing that appears in print concerning a Member of Parliament in his private capacity. This doctrine would go to erect the House into a summary tribunal for the punishment of all obnoxious writings, and would ultimately annihilate the liberty of the Press. On general principles, therefore, we object to the punishment of any individuals, however scandalous their conduct, by so alarming a stretch of a doubtful prerogative. The incidents in the discussion of the subject are amusing enough, and none more so than Lord Castlereagh's attempt to strike a balance between the infamous calumnies of Tory slanderers, and the fiercest hostilities of Reformist writers. His Lordship's gallantry would fain have been very indignant against the wretches who aspersed female honour; but his loyalty flamed too much against the assailers of "sacred majesty." He tried to shut his eyes to the distinction between attacks on private and public character; but we should think the case put by Lord John Russell about *Irish* horrors must have made him wince again. By the way, in regard to the late pointed caricatures, it would seem the cap fits; and Mr. Hone may enjoy the satisfaction of knowing, that his arrows have lodged in the sore parts of corruption.

Mr. Lennard moved for the Repeal of the Seditious Meetings and Libel Acts on Tuesday, in a very sound and argumentative speech. In particular, he placed in a strong light the absurdity and wickedness of continuing Acts passed under the influence of the statements of the Manchester Magistrates, seeing that those statements were afterwards so triumphantly refuted on Mr. Hunt's Trial at York. The motion was chiefly opposed by Mr. Serjeant Onslow, who eulogized Judge Best's temper, and said 1819 was a more dangerous period than 1796! A large majority negatived the attempt. Similar fate attended some Resolutions proposed by Lord John Russell, with a view to disfranchise rotten boroughs, and to extend the elective franchise to large unrepresented towns.—Lord A. Hamilton, in moving some more matter-of-fact Resolutions about Scotch Representation, (which were lost however because they were *abstract*!) very pointedly remarked on the way in which important measures were received in Parliament by thin houses, and decided at the division by a set of creatures who were strolling about town during the debate! That is the real point after all; and great good would be done if all Opposition Members who propose measures of Reform would be as honest as Lord Hamilton in confessing the hopelessness of such motions as far as regards Parliamentary success.—*Examiner*.

PARLIAMENTARY.

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Imperial Parliament.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1821.

MOTION FOR INQUIRY INTO THE OUTRAGES AT MANCHESTER.

Sir F. BURDETT rose. After the various petitions which had been presented to the house, stating, in terms as simple as they were incontrovertible, and as affecting as they were unaffected, the injuries which had been inflicted on the people whilst peaceably assembled for a purpose of the highest importance to the country, namely, the expression of their feelings upon the necessity of reform he rose, not knowing to whom the blame of the transaction ought to attach, but with the intention of discovering that point by his motion: for, whether it was to the ministers, or whether it was to the magistrates, or whether it was to the yeomanry, who so particularly distinguished themselves on that occasion, that the great share of blame ought to attach, or whether it was to attach to them all collectively, was more than he could tell at present, and was, therefore, a proof that some inquiry into the subject was necessary. It fell to the lot of many to celebrate the triumphs of our arms abroad; but his task was different—it belonged to him *celebrare domestica facta*; and if, as the Secretary at War had not long since said, the nation was now only in the first year of domestic peace; if, after war had so long ceased on the continent, a strife had been still kept up in our own Island, which had only just been concluded by the extermination of the friends of liberty and justice, it was one of those triumphs to which glory had yet been attributed in no country of the world. The subject was so important in all points of view, whether it were considered as affecting the happiness and freedom of the people, the dignity, and he would say the security of the King himself, or the laws and constitution of the realm, that in endeavouring to draw the attention of the house and of the public to it, he felt that he was likely to gain much more credit for zeal than for discretion; but

galeatum sero ducti

Penitet.

His object was to procure an enquiry into a subject, regarding which, to the disgrace of the government, no investigation had yet been instituted. (*hear, hear.*) In order fitly to introduce it, it would be necessary to recur to what had passed upon a former occasion, and to animadvert on what fell from different gentlemen in parliament, who had endeavoured to shew, that there was no ground of complaint; that all the statements made, of violence committed on the people, were without foundation—or that that violence was justified by the circumstances of the case. He recollected particularly that the hon. member for Lancashire (Lark Stanley) asserted that it was not until the yeomanry had been attacked with bludgeons, stones, and brickbats, that they “turned round upon the mob, and some wounds were inflicted.” His respect for that noble lord made him (Sir F. Burdett) believe that he would be glad to embrace this opportunity of confessing, that the representation he then made was not founded in fact. (*hear.*) In commencing a subject of so delicate and extraordinary a nature, it might be necessary for him in the onset to guard himself by protesting that in the language he should employ he meant nothing personal to any honorable member. He was called upon to say this, because he really knew not of what terms to avail himself, unless he used those that most strongly expressed his meaning; and if he introduced the word “falsehood,” as he must unavoidably do over and over again, he hoped it would be taken by those to whom it was applied, only in the sense of a statement contrary to the fact. (*hear, and some laughter.*) The next honorable gentleman, whose language he bore strongly in memory, was the member for Dover (Mr. B. Wilbraham.) He had said that it was not until the yeomanry had been most violently assailed by sticks, stones, and missiles, collected for the purpose on the ground, that they lifted an arm against the people. After him, rising in a just climax of—(he knew not what word to use)—in a just climax of statement, since proved to be groundless and untrue, followed the Solicitor-General for the crown. He asserted not only that attacks were made by the people, but that some of the yeomanry were literally unhorsed. (*hear.*) He begged leave to observe, that he did not impute to the learned gentleman any wilful intention to mislead by falsehood; and he should be especially sorry to charge improper motives in this instance, because he confessed that particular circumstances, of which the Solicitor-General might think nothing, had produced a feeling in his (Sir Francis Burdett’s) mind which he should never forget, and which made him anxious not to animadvert on the conduct of that learned gentleman in terms more harsh than were absolutely necessary. He belonged to a profession, the business of which was to make the best of a case: *dolus an virtus* ought to be the peculiar motto of every lawyer: but he trusted that even that learned gentleman would have sufficient candour to own that he had been mistaken. He now arrived in due course of ascent to the speech of the noble lord opposite, who in his airy flight of imagination mounted far above his compeers. He

had stated to the house matters, not only since proved to be totally groundless, but proved not to have the slightest verisimilitude—to have no distant resemblance to the fact, but to be utterly and absolutely false and fabricated. (*hear, hear.*) His Lordship had maintained that there had been no interference on the part of the magistrates, until the meeting assumed the character of tumult and treason. He went on to relate, that the people assailed the yeomanry with sticks, stones, brickbats, and even with fire-arms (*hear*)—that fire-arms were used by the people against the military, not by the military against the people (*hear, hear*)—that though great care was taken to clear the square of stones, brickbats, and missiles, on the day previous to the meeting, yet that a violent attack was made on the cavalry, that showers of stones were poured upon their heads, and that from the very same place that the day before had been cleared, waggon-loads of stones were removed. (*hear, hear, hear.*) He should like to know from whence those stones had been obtained. The noble lord had stated that the people brought them in their pockets, yet it was admitted that they were so densely wedged and jammed together, that they could not even lift their arms from their sides. From whence, then, had the stones come, unless the noble lord, with certain philosophers, held, that they fell from the moon; and assuredly that was a much more probable conjecture, than that the people should have brought them in their pockets. This flight to the moon, however, was not high enough for the noble lord: he mounted with a bolder pinion, and ventured to add, not only that the magistrates did not and would not interfere with the meeting, until it assumed the formidable shape of tumult and treason; but that even then they were determined to act according to the strictness of the law: one magistrate read the riot act from a window in the first instance, but as that was not held to come up to what was required, another magistrate, notwithstanding the tumult and formidable appearance of the meeting, like another Decius, devoted himself to his country—plunged into the midst of danger to read the riot act, and was trampled down by the people. (*hear, hear.*) That was not all: the self-devoting magistrates multiplied like Falstaff’s buckram men, and a third actually made his way to the hustings, and there read the riot act: so that no person present could have the pretence of saying, that he was ignorant of the fact. If this had been truth, he (Sir F. Burdett) could have had nothing to say; but it was proved to be utterly and completely false: it had been proved so in a court of law, which observed great strictness in evidence, and did not, as the House Commons too often did, receive implicitly the bare assertion of a minister. A court of law looked into facts; it sifted them and tried them by many severe tests; and the statement of the noble lord had there been disproved by numerous and respectable witnesses, who had no connexion with the parties accused, and no political feelings in common with them. If gentlemen would take the trouble to read the evidence taken on the trials at York, they would find that, with the exception of Mr. Hulton, there was not a witness for the Crown, who did not bear testimony to the peaceable and orderly conduct of the people. Mr. Hulton was the only person who had seen the showers of stones which the noble lord had added were afterwards collected in waggons. He (Sir F. Burdett) hoped that the noble lord would take care of these precious stones—that he would cause them to be preserved in the British Museum, or some other public depository, as a memento to the house to beware how it allowed itself in future to be misled by statements intended to be followed by new and violent encroachments on the rights, laws, and liberties, of the country. (*much cheering.*) But even Mr. Hulton who took the chair among the magistrates, because no other man could be found to fill it, did not state how the attack commenced—whether it was by order to the troops, or whether, without authority, they had fallen upon the unoffending multitude, excited by animosity or inflamed by intoxication. Surely, if there were nothing else, this alone demanded inquiry. Surely it ought to be ascertained, at least, why and by whom the shedding of blood upon that day was occasioned. (*hear, hear.*) Mr. Hulton took upon himself to say, that he saw the yeomanry beaten; and he accordingly ordered Colonel L’Estrange, with a party of the 15th Dragoons, to support them; yet it was as notorious as the sun at noon, that not a single witness had corroborated this assertion; even Nadin, who said, but only said, that he could not serve a warrant without the aid of the military, did not confirm it: even the Rev. Mr. Hay, who before and since the Manchester massacre had been in constant communication with ministers, did not confirm it: only Mr. Hulton had been gifted with senses differently formed from those of all the rest of mankind. He took it for granted that it would not be denied that the evidence produced at York completely disproved all those inflated, exaggerated, and false statements with regard to the conduct of the people on the 16th of August, 1819. Without looking at any other part of the question, that alone demanded the fullest inquiry. He took it to be so clear that the interference of the military could not be justified, that he confidently trusted the house would adopt measures to ascertain where the blame ought to lie. It appeared that the magistrates were not the least aware that there was any illegality in the meeting. The imperfect correspondence on the table shewed that Ministers had been long before acquainted with the intended banners, mottos, and all the other circumstances; yet they had never given a hint that the

civil power had a right to interfere. It was evident, from a letter dated the 1st of July, 1819, signed by Mr. Norris and four other magistrates, and addressed to Lord Sidmouth, who filled an office known to the old tyrannical government of France and to the new military government of England, that of *lieutenant de police*, that they had no notion that there was any thing illegal in the assembly. The next letter was from Mr. Spooner, of Birmingham, regarding the meeting to elect a legislative attorney, which was alleged to be illegal, though he (Sir Francis Boddett) should hold it no more so than a meeting to elect a mayor of Carrat. Mr. Spooner, however, entertained great fears upon the subject; yet the very next day he wrote that all his apprehensions were groundless. The people had been intoxicated and excited to no illegal act, though this had been one of the most objectionable meetings throughout the kingdom. It was to be remembered, too, that the Manchester meeting was held after those of the metropolis, under the very eyes of ministers. It was after the great Smithfield meeting, at which the Lord Mayor of London had figured, having applied to the *lieutenant de police* to prevent it, who in his turn applied to the law officers of the crown. The meeting, nevertheless, was held; and nothing could show more decisively the resolutely peaceable conduct of the people than the manner in which they behaved when the Rev. Mr. Harrison, who presided, was arrested upon a warrant from the Lord Mayor. No resistance was made, the intention to irritate failed, and the good sense and temper of the people triumphed. He could not but believe that the object at the time was to excite the multitude to some acts of violence, that ministers might turn those acts to their own advantage. One reason for saying so was, that, at that meeting, a most inflammatory handbill was circulated, calling upon the people to rise, in the strongest and coarsest terms, and ending with "Go it, my boys," had been seen by Lord Sidmouth before the meeting, and had been traced to Edwards, or some of the spies notoriously employed by government, and always found operating with the greatest eagerness, whenever individuals were to be entrapped into acts fatal to themselves and mischievous to the public at large. The next document was the despatch of Mr. Hayes after the memorable 16th of Aug. and which was quite enough to satisfy every reasonable man, independently of the evidence at York, that nothing would have been more easy than to execute a warrant by the peace officers; for it was acknowledged there was a line of constables from the hustings to the house where the magistrates were posted. Nadin, indeed, had asserted the contrary; but he had shrunk from swearing it at York; and many others as well as he, declined making oath to what they had previously stated. Yet all these horrid scenes were grounded on the representation of Nadin, that he could not serve a warrant without the aid of the military. Mr. Hay added, that there was no appearance of arms or pikes, though a noble lord in another place had said that the multitude had great store of pikes. In another part of his despatch this reverend divine and magistrate, so relied upon by the crown, had asserted what was utterly false; for it appeared by Nadin's testimony that he did not precede the cavalry, but that they preceded him, and that all the violence was committed without the slightest pretence. To show the spirit of the yeomanry, it was worth observing that the case of Mr. Saxton was very remarkable. One of the yeomanry pointed him out, "There is that villain Saxton; run him through." The man declined doing so; in consequence of which the other made a blow at Saxton, which luckily failed of its effect. Yet "that villain Saxton" was totally guiltless; the crown had abandoned his prosecution at York, because it could produce no evidence against him. Nevertheless, such was the conduct of the yeomanry, that this innocent man might have lost his life. What said the law of England to this? (*hear.*) Even in apprehending a criminal, more violence than was necessary was not to be used; and his life was not to be assailed unless he made the most desperate resistance, and unless the crime with which he was charged rendered his life forfeit. The law of England was founded on the law of God, delivered in that book which all believed, but which many in the situation of ministers must "believe and tremble too." The first precept given by the Almighty to the surviving ancestor of mankind was this—"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." The only expiation of blood was by blood; and if it were shed by accident, the shedder was not held free from guilt. This was wisely ordained for the protection of mankind; and though pardon could in no case be granted, yet a mitigation was allowed; for he who shed blood by misfortune might fly to cities for refuge, where he was considered polluted and guilty, and whence he might not depart till the death of the High-priest. The law of England in like manner said that the shedding of human blood under no circumstances but one was free from guilt. It was justifiable homicide in self-defence, or in the prosecution of some legal act rendering the alternative inevitable. But when death ensued from misfortune or accident, more or less carelessness might be mixed up with the act. The law had been nice and tender upon this subject; if a man were attacked, he must not attempt to destroy his enemy until, according to the old and plain expression of the law, he is himself "driven to the wall." Though encroachments had been made of late in public law,

and though it had been rendered monstrously severe by various enactments, and by none more so than by that intended temporary statute which now, like other abuses, was made a part of the permanent constitution, the great riot act, yet that authorized no man to shed the blood of his fellow. If instead of 3 times, it had been 10 times read at Manchester, unless due care were taken, unless time were given to the people to disperse, unless great and immediate danger would arise from their not dispersing, there was no justification under that severe law for any violence, much less for such violence as was perpetrated on the 16th of August. Did it say that the soldiers should come in and kill the people? Certainly not: it provided only that those who remained an hour after it had been read, should be taken into custody, and if convicted, should be deemed guilty of felony. Under that law an execution had taken place at Shrewsbury, where a young man of 17 or 18 years had committed no other offence, it being thought necessary to make an example of the kind. But had it ever till now been held legal under it, to attack unarmed men, nay, even women and children? To attack an indiscriminate mass of people closely assembled together—to cut them up with sabres prepared for slaughter, and that too without distinction of age or sex, was an outrage which froze the blood in one's veins (*hear.*); and that no part of the eclat of the day should be lost upon these Manchester heroes as they had reason to call themselves, it was right to mention an occurrence which took place even as they were going to the atrocious attack upon an unarmed and unresisting multitude. They encountered a woman on their way who held a child in her arms: she naturally enough must have looked upon herself as safe from any ferocious attack: she had about her that protection which one would think would have told for her, with any thing that bore the human shape; but what was her fate? This woman, bearing her infant in her arms, was ridden over, and her child killed at her bosom as these heroes advanced to the attack (*hear.*) And then, to crown the whole, the verdict of the Coroner's Inquest was that the child had died by a fall from its mother's arms. (*hear.*) When, however, they at length arrived upon this memorable field of massacre and slaughter, when they attacked, sword in hand, the people who had peaceably assembled, and who were left without any intimation of what was intended, then it was found in what situation the meeting had placed itself. The people fled, or attempted to fly from the dreadful charge made upon them: but to their horror and surprise they found flight impracticable; for the avenues of the place were closed by armed men. On one side they were driven back at the point of the bayonet by the infantry, while on the other they were cut down by the sabres of the yeomanry. (*hear, hear, hear.*) The description of the event in the daily prints conveyed a full idea of the horror of the scene. In one of them (the honorable baronet alluded to the *Mock Times*) the description of the personal danger of those on the spot was striking in the extreme. In that print it was represented that so great was the frightful confusion among the crowd in their attempt to escape from the sabres of the yeomanry, when they found all the regular outlets shut against them, that they actually bore down a wall or building by the pressure of their own weight; and the writer of the paragraph in question described that he saw many of them buried under the ruins which they had caused by their violent contact with the building. The writer added, and well he might, that the cry of the multitude was *sauve qui peut*. Happy indeed was he who could save himself amid that frightful confusion. (*hear, hear.*) The writer afterwards states that he had the good fortune to escape by placing himself under the protection of a constable. The account given of the massacre bore, indeed, no resemblance to the legal dispersion of any description of meeting: it rather described the taking of a town by storm, when the officers had lost in the fury of the moment all control over the excited passions of the soldiery. (*hear, hear.*) Well might he have asked (he would not say what answer he got to his question) "Is this a Christian land? Is this a land of liberty?" (*hear, hear.*) Yes, he would repeat, it was a Christian land. Yes, he would call it still a land of liberty (*hear, hear.*), one in which power, however absolute might be the attempt to exercise it, had yet its limits; and where, whatever became of the money which was torn from the pockets of the people, there was one place, and that place the House of Commons, where the shedding of their blood must be atoned for, shed by whom it may. It was some consolation for him to have heard that night, that a few of the wretches who had perpetrated the massacre at Manchester were at the time in a state of intoxication. It was always more consolatory to think that men engaged in a bloody purpose were not deliberately acting under the guidance of their own reason, but under the frenzy of feverish and drunken excitement; and he was happy to find that at least that excuse could be offered for some of those who were engaged in the outrages of that day. (*hear.*) An idea might be formed of the violent and indiscriminate manner of the massacre, when it was known that these yeomanry in their fury and blindness, actually cut down some of their own troops; for the constables on that occasion were armed, and some of them had fallen under the hoofs of the yeomanry. When a man was asked how he came to know the constables on that day, his reply was singular enough, that he did not know them until he saw men in the crowd

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knocked down by their bludgeons, and then he ascertained they were peace officers. (*a laugh and hear.*) Every thing both at the time, and subsequently to the 16th of August, was characteristic of the indiscriminate havoc of the day. A woman examined before the Oldham inquest, when describing the state of the body of the deceased John Lees, which she had seen stripped after death, said it was cut and stabbed from shoulder to hip; and she gave an illustration of its disfigured state which he mentioned, on account of its allusion, with shame, namely, that the back of the deceased looked like that of a soldier after being flogged. (*hear, hear.*) With respect to the avenues to the place of meeting being closed upon the multitude by armed men, there was no doubt of the fact. People were forced back again into the field of havoc and slaughter: that act had been recorded in the face of the country: it was known in the courts of law, where it had been disclosed: and well might his hon. friend the member for Southampton (Sir W. de Crespigny) have again described it upon the authority of those who were eye-witnesses of the fact. Referring again to what had been written by Mr. Hay, he found that that gentleman went on to state that they (the Manchester magistrates) took Mr. Hunt, and that "a few were hurt during the affair." (*hear.*) But afterwards came that most extraordinary part of the whole of this peculiarly anomalous transaction; for it seemed that when the man was taken and the meeting dispersed, there arose an unexpected difficulty. Difficulty! of what nature? why, for the magistrates to determine, and after the fact, what was the nature of the crime with which they were to charge the prisoners. (*hear, & ar, hear.*) They first apprehended a man they had no right to take into custody, and after that act they sat down for the first time in consultation together, to consider with what they should charge him; that was, they took a man first, and then they held a council to see what was the crime he might have committed. (*hear, hear.*) Having, however, done all this, they made it the subject of a despatch to government; and surely such a despatch, both as to the crime charged, and the manner of charging it, was never before transmitted to any government in any country. Doubtless the government, by whom that dreadful act was applauded, had consoled themselves with the hope that the terrible example of the massacre at Manchester would silence all public complaint, and terrify the people from meeting any where to promote parliamentary reform. It appeared, however, that the example, notwithstanding its obvious intention, had altogether failed in its effect; for the people, indignant as they were at the outrage, were not yet so entirely appalled as to be driven from the great question of reform; they met as before, and the ministers were compelled to desist from carrying on their system. Though, like Macbeth, they had stepped far in blood, yet they did not, like him, think that "returning were more tedious than go o'er:" they thought it better to stop where they had gone, than advance still deeper; and the people of Westminster and other parts of the country met, he believed, in still greater numbers than they had done at Manchester, to consider of the best means of relieving the unfortunate sufferers on the 16th of August. The number of victims by the catastrophe of that day was considerable: it exceeded the number of killed and wounded in some of those glorious battles which redounded to the national fame: above 600 were relieved by the public subscription: and strangely enough, there would be seen in the list of those who had received pecuniary relief, special constables who had been wounded by the yeomanry (*hear*), and also a man named Murray, who had even been represented as a spy of the magistrates on that day, and who had got 15l. to pay his doctor's bill for attendance, received during the cure of his wounds. (*hear.*) In that melancholy and distressing list of sufferers, relieved by the subscription, would be seen the names of 120 women (*hear, hear*); ay, and of children at the breast: neither age nor sex had found nature's safeguard. Mr. Holton himself admitted, in his evidence at York, that he had seen in the house where he and his brother magistrates sat, a woman fainting under a wound received upon her breast. (*hear.*) This was no doubt admitting enough of the fact of the atrocities having been indiscriminately committed on that day; but it was said, "await the justification." They had awaited that justification, and found it false. The ministers had themselves confessed the guilt of the parties. There could be no more correct conclusion than this—that when any party accused set up a justification for having committed a particular act, it was a confession, *per se*, that he had committed that act. If, therefore, all the reasons alleged in justification proved false, there remained only the parties' own confession of guilt that stood on record; and such was the situation in which his Majesty's ministers stood before parliament and the country for this flagitious act. He repeated, that all the attempted justificatory reasons had failed; and, in pronouncing that decision, he was not recording alone his own opinion, but also that of, he might say, the highest judicial authority on the bench, namely, Mr. Justice Bayley, who said, at the trial at York, that none of the circumstances relied upon by the government, abstractedly considered, did of themselves necessarily imply guilt. The learned judge had distinctly laid down that the numbers at the meeting did not alone constitute guilt. No, nor even the carrying banners in the procession, nor the drilling itself; he said that the intention alone constituted the guilt of the parties; that it was the

intention with which their acts were done which must govern the jury in their verdict; and that it was unimportant in estimating the circumstances of the meeting whether the crowd consisted of three persons or 3,000—that the intention of those assembled, be they large, or small, was the whole point for consideration in the case. (*hear, hear.*) The learned judge was an old lawyer, and had, no doubt, read in his old books the maxim—"Voluntas et propositum, distinguunt maleficium." (*hear.*) If to meet peaceably for the consideration of a peaceable and legal subject was to expose a meeting to military violence, and to put them out of the protection of the law, then it was time for every Englishman to reflect upon his situation, and bid adieu for ever to the liberties of his country. (*hear, hear.*) If numbers alone constituted guilt, how could the people ever meet with effect? It was by numbers they could alone speak, so as to give strength and consistency to their voice, and make their grievances listened to by the reluctant ears of that house. Mr. Hunt, at the Manchester meeting had, in recommending a peaceable demeanour to the meeting, acted with more becoming prudence than the magistrates who had apprehended him. The pretence of the people having carried arms to the meeting was utterly groundless; and to talk of their having commenced the attack upon the armed soldiers was, on the face of it, absurd and ridiculous. (*hear, hear.*) To tell him that an unarmed and defenceless multitude were preparing to attack an armed and equipped soldiery, was to talk of the attack of a flock of sheep upon a body of wolves. (*hear, hear.*) The thing was, on the face of it, nonsensical. The people knew they had no means of repelling the attack. They thought they had assembled under the protection of the law, and they knew they had no other protection than that law (*hear*), which used to be, according to the expressive phrase of an able lawyer, "the shield and helmet" of the people; but which, unfortunately at this sad crisis, they felt neither as a shield nor as a helmet. (*hear.*) The people were, in fact, employed in doing that for which it might be said they had the sanction of the magistrates who had so outrageously dispersed them. Upon a previous day (the 9th of August), there was to have been a meeting at Manchester similar to one held at Birmingham for electing a legislative attorney, or some such object. The magistrates denounced that intended meeting, and thinking it to be for an illegal object, they did that which it was their duty—they gave public notice of their intention, and warned the people against attending any such assembly. (*hear, hear.*) That was a fair notice to the people; it had its due effect, and the original meeting was abandoned. But it was said, the intentions of the people remained the same, although they had nominally changed the purpose of their meeting; that they still intended to subvert the existing order of society; that there were among the people those who sought rank by convulsion, who meant to become dukes and peers when they had divided among themselves and their associates the estates of the aristocracy of the country. Really persons who honestly and conscientiously entertained such sentiments of the people, were either very wilfully mistaken, or else they must have obstinately kept themselves in a strange state of ignorance. It would be in vain to argue with those who steadfastly entertained such opinions. With just the same reason might they in their fears apprehend, that Atlas would resign his load, and the world fall into pieces around them! He had already said that when the people were warned of the illegality of the first intended meeting, they abandoned it in obedience to the admonition of the magistrates, and they then assembled for a different purpose, which they and which he considered both proper and lawful—namely, to prepare a petition for a reform in parliament. If the magistrates deemed the meeting of the 16th of August illegal, why not, like on the preceding occasion, have denounced it? Mr. Hunt had waited upon them a day or two before, in consequence of some rumour that a charge was intended to be brought against him: he wished to surrender to that charge if any existed, rather than expose the meeting to inconsiderate interruption at the time it was to take place. What was on that occasion the conduct of the magistrates? (*hear, hear, hear.*) They denied having any charge against him: they notified no opposition to the approaching meeting, and therefore he felt himself entitled to assume that the meeting must be considered as having had the sanction of the magistrates. (*hear, hear.*) The people had invariably preserved the peace when not obstructed at their meetings. After the Manchester business, one was held at Wigan, which, according to the letter signed "Balcarrais," addressed to Lord Sidmouth, was attended by all the symbols of sedition, and such like: the people had their leaders, their flags, and their marches, and what happened? They were left unmolested at their meeting, and "the day passed away in tranquillity." (*hear.*) The same occurred at the subsequent meeting in York, at which there was, he had heard, a still larger attendance than at Manchester; and the people, after going through the business of the day in a peaceable and legal manner, quietly dispersed without any obstruction from the bludgeons of the peace officers. (*hear, hear.*) Indeed all the meetings throughout the country were conducted in the same spirit of order when left to their own management, and without interference. (*hear.*) The people uniformly showed the utmost deference to the laws, which were, he was sorry to say, only violated by those whose solemn duty it was to have

kept them free from violation. (*hear, hear.*) He hardly knew a circumstance in history which was so much to be deplored as the dreadful occurrence at Manchester. The people of England, he feared, never could, never would forget it. (*hear, hear.*) He was entitled to say that all would have been peaceable if the meeting had been left unmolested. Who then were the authors of that calamity which would never be forgotten? He would not stop to assign their share in the deeds of the day to the Manchester yeomanry. He would not stop to investigate the respective shares of the subordinate actors; but would at once demand investigation into the conduct of ministers themselves, and hold them responsible for all the calamities which they had countenanced. (*hear, hear, hear.*) But to return to the list of the killed and wounded, a list which was swelled in amount beyond the loss endured by Admiral Jervis in that great and brilliant victory off Cape St. Vincent, which conferred the splendour of a title upon his name. (*hear, hear.*) In that victory 15 sail of British ships defeated 27 sail of Spanish, and brought (what was unusual) a number of them into port; and the loss, in killed and wounded, was between 300 and 400—a number falling short by upwards of 200 of the amount which had suffered in the massacre at Manchester; an amount comprising men, women, and children. (*hear, hear.*) It was surely impossible for the house to listen to this recital, and resist an inquiry into the particulars of an occurrence so unprecedented and so fatal: into these transactions they were imperatively bound to enquire, for in fact the enquiry could not now be instituted in any other place. The courts of law had been referred to, but those who referred to them knew that the subject was of too vast a size for the courts of law. (*hear, hear.*) The courts of law, if, instead of being closed upon this occasion they were even open, could not conduct such an inquiry; all they could do would be to redress individual wrongs. They might inquire into the scale of redress or quantum of injury applicable to the cases of A. B. or C. D.; but they could not adequately inquire into the fatal injury inflicted upon the British Constitution. (*loud cries of hear, hear.*) He had gone thus far, and almost forgotten a document which, though short was most precious. Indeed its contents were brief; but not a word could be spared from the document. If it were true that nothing could be too long from which nothing could without detriment be taken, it must be equally true that that could not be too short from which a word could not be spared. He alluded to Lord Sidmouth's letter, dated Whitehall, August 21, addressed to the Manchester magistrates, and which expressed, by command of his Majesty, "the great satisfaction" the King derived, "from their prompt, decisive, and efficient measure for the preservation of the public tranquillity." It was monstrous to declare that the King of England could have derived "great satisfaction" from the perpetration of these horrid crimes. (*loud and continued cheers.*) The King had no connexion with that letter: it conveyed no feeling in which a King of England could ever participate, nor any word which such a King could use in the expression of his sentiments on such an occasion. (*loud cheers.*) "Great satisfaction," indeed at the slaying of his subjects. He (Sir Francis Burrell) would venture to say that had the noble lord (Sidmouth) ransacked the whole English language, he could not have picked out one expression which he ought to have more scrupulously avoided than the term "great satisfaction," to put into the mouth of his Sovereign. (*hear, hear.*) What! the King to be made to feel and express great satisfaction on hearing of the instantaneous massacre of a large number of his subjects without distinction of age or sex, and to communicate to the perpetrators of such atrocious deeds, his "high approbation of their support and assistance!"—the thing was impossible; it never could have happened. (*hear.*) It was the act of the minister; the King stood free from such an imputation. For the outrage of Manchester, he could find no parallel in the history of the world. Perhaps there was something like a parallel with it to be found in the conduct of the Romans, who decreed in their senate the destruction of the Goths in their Asiatic provinces. This inhuman decree was carried into effect by Julius, the Master-General of the Roman troops, who carefully collected together on the appointed day the Gothic youth in the square or forum; the streets and avenues were occupied and blocked up by the Roman troops, and at a signal given, the unprepared and unexpected victims were surrendered to indiscriminate slaughter. (*hear.*) He would do the King of England the justice to believe that he had not expressed "great satisfaction" at the communication of the slaughter at Manchester. Nothing had been ever acted in the name of a king which could have been so inimical to the real feeling of that king, as the expression of such a sentiment as was on this occasion put into his Majesty's mouth by his minister. (*hear.*) It was not the least remarkable part of this unparalleled outrage, that the minister should have selected nearly such expressions for transmission to the authors of the crime as had been used in describing the massacre of the Goths in the Asiatic provinces of the Romans:—

"His diebus Julii Magistrum militum enituit officia, velox et salutaris." Whether the noble lord, when he transmitted thanks in the name of his King to the authors of the crime, for "their prompt, decisive, and efficient" conduct, had had, in his classical recollection, the words used by Ammianus, or whether it was that the same devil which prompts men

to do the same evil acts, had suggested the same words for conveying their description, he could not tell; but it was strikingly remarkable, that the only two acts which in history bore any thing like a resemblance to each other, should, at such a distance of time from their respective occurrence, be expressed in words nearly of the same import. (*hear, hear, hear.*) That his Majesty could have expressed any such satisfaction at the massacre of an unarmed multitude of men, women, and children, he never could believe. That such an event should have suggested "satisfaction" in the breast of the King, he repeated, he never could believe: he would not believe it from any man in England, even if the blood were necessarily shed, and therefore justified. If the shocking punishment were necessarily inflicted for the summary suppression of violence, and in the execution of the law, it was impossible that the King could have exhibited such a total absence of all feeling and common sense, as to make use of an indecorous expression of his "high satisfaction" at the shedding (however shed) of the blood of his people. (*hear.*) If this outrage were left unredressed, it would entail disgrace upon the age in which they lived. The courts of justice were, he repeated, shut against inquiry; and the attempts of the sufferers to obtain redress were defeated out of doors by every species of chicanery. (*hear.*) This was the first time since England was England that a coroner had taken upon himself the responsibility of refusing to perform his duty. (*hear, hear, hear.*) Such an act must be reviewed with detestation and horror. He first neglected to perform his duty, and then made that neglect the ground of his ultimately abandoning it: when he had instituted an inquisition, his unwarrantable adjournment of that inquest was an obstruction of the stream of justice from pursuing its even course. (*hear, hear.*) How was it that a judge had astutely discovered that the defect in the mode of conducting the inquest was fatal to its continuance after the defect was remedied? First, the coroner being necessarily absent upon other business, suffered his clerk to swear in the jury, as was customary upon similar occasions; but the Court of King's Bench at length discovered that what never had been the practice ought to have in this case occurred, and that the coroner (not his deputy) and the jury, before they were sworn, should have together seen the body of the deceased. There probably never was a legal inquisition conducted in this country with all the nice legal technicalities which it seemed should have been observed in this particular case. Here the honorable baronet took a review of the manner in which all the attempts made by the sufferers to obtain legal redress had been repelled. The magistrates refused informations, because a grand jury had thrown out some of the bills. The people finding that to be the case at Lancaster, went to Warrington to tender their complaints. There again Mr. Bonham refused the proffered information; and in this manner by one evasion or another, justice was obstructed, delayed, or denied. (*hear, hear.*) He must again say that this was not an inquiry into individual wrongs, but into a flagrant violation of the constitution. (*hear, hear, hear.*) When it was considered that the King's ministers were not contented with making a gross and groundless fabrication to delude the house and turn them from inquiry into these transactions, and moreover when it was considered that they had grounded upon that delusion no less than six acts which were the greatest encroachment upon the rights of the people since the time of the revolution; so much so, that of them it might be said that they effected in 1819 a revolution of the great principles which had been established by a revolution in 1689 (*hear*); when this was considered, he thought that house could no longer resist inquiry. He had thought when the outrage was committed, that it was unfortunate the inquiry was not then entered into; but now that nearly 2 years had elapsed, he thought that which at the time appeared unfortunate, had turned out to be rather a piece of good fortune; for it enabled them, calmly and dispassionately, unheated by the influence of the moment when the outrage was fresh in their mind to come now to a sober and deliberate investigation of the question. The house had now a proper opportunity to form a just estimate of those false, profligate, and vile imposters, whose testimony had led to such grievous results. Time had fortunately done that which it never failed to do—it had rent asunder the veil which hypocrisy, and trick, and chicanery, had thrown around this subject; and it now presented to the eyes of an astonished country this portentous event in all its naked and hideous deformity. (*hear.*) That event he might well describe in the language of an ancient writer—*Nihil est scelestius, nihil perniciosius, nihil quod hæc civitas magis plorare possit.* Unless that house lost all respect for itself, unless it had thrown aside all regard for public liberty: unless gentlemen had not only dismissed all reverence for justice, but also all feeling for their own character and estimation in the world; they would, on this occasion, go into that inquiry, which he now demanded on the part of the people of England; they would now make good those professions, which some of them had expressed, when they stated that they wished a full inquiry to take place. The time had arrived when those professions were to be tried, not by their loudness, but by the test of fact and experience. (*hear.*) It was impossible that a subject of this kind could be allowed to remain in its present state. It was impossible that an administration stained by the blood of the people—for so, he must contend, the present present administration was stained

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until that blood was somehow atoned for—could continue as it now was. (*hear.*) And it was equally impossible that that house could refuse an inquiry into that scandalous, and wanton, and profligate expenditure of blood; for, however lightly the profligate expenditure of the public purse might be viewed, it could not be supposed that the same levity of feeling would be entertained with respect to their persons. This was the only way by which they could come before the country and the world, in a fair, open, and candid manner. And he called on those gentlemen who had stated circumstances which had so much deluded the house, to declare to the country and to the world, what it was that had thus imposed on their understandings. He wished to drag some of their spies and informers (if they had received their intelligence from such impure sources) before the public. He wished “to drag those monsters into day.” (*hear, hear.*) Ministers could no longer screen themselves under those depositions which lay on the table, and which, instead of names, presented all the letters of the alphabet. He desired to know at least who A, B, C, and D, were. He wanted to learn the names of the parties whose information led to an event which overwhelmed them and their abettors with disgrace. (*hear, hear.*) He could only say that, as far as he was concerned, he had, to the best of his power, endeavoured to do justice to the people, and to give ministers an opportunity to do justice to themselves. The noble lord opposite—whose statements in that house, with reference to the subject under consideration, had had more weight than the observations of any other person—would, he trusted, for that reason concur with him, on this occasion, in the propriety of the motion he was about to submit—namely, “that a committee be appointed, by this house, to inquire into the transactions of the magistrates and yeomanry at Manchester, on the 16th of August 1819.” (*loud cheering.*)

Mr HOBHOUSE.—“I beg leave to second the motion.”

The question, as put by the SPEAKER, was—“That this house do resolve itself into a committee of the whole house, to inquire into the transactions that took place at Manchester, on the 16th of August, 1819.”

Mr B. WILBRAHAM immediately rose. He said he presented himself to the house with great diffidence on this occasion, although he was most anxious to rescue the conduct of the magistrates of Lancashire from the aspersions which had been cast upon it. Notwithstanding he felt personally interested in this question, he was extremely glad that it was now fairly at issue before the house. He did not think the honorable baronet had dealt justly either to the parties accused or to those persons whose cause he professed to support; and he would briefly state his reasons for thinking so. The circumstance took place two years ago. The events at Manchester occurred before the session of 1819, and in the month of April following the honorable baronet gave notice of a motion which he afterwards put off, on grounds that did not appear to him (Mr. Wilbraham) to have adequately justified the postponement of a question of so much importance. Now, having suffered the subject to sleep for upwards of a 12-month, he did not think the honorable baronet had acted fairly either to those who were accused or those who complained, in bringing it forward now. (*hear, from the Opposition benches.*) He meant to impute nothing that could be personally offensive to the honorable baronet, and if any unpleasant expression should escape his lips he was ready to ask pardon for it. To the eloquent statement of the honorable baronet he had nothing to oppose but plain unadorned facts. He had recourse to facts, because they would have more weight than any statement coming merely from himself. Such a statement would not, perhaps, go farther than the house, while the speech of the honorable baronet would probably find its way through the country. The house and the country had, perhaps, been led to draw an inference unfavourable to the magistrates of Lancashire, on account of the silence they had thought proper to preserve with respect to the charges that had been made against them. The magistrates had from the first signified their intention and wish to go before a tribunal where substantial justice would be done. They were in expectation of going before a court of law (*hear, from the Opposition benches*); but they had not been called on; and they thought it was more dignified, more worthy of their situation, and more consonant with the innocence which they felt, to submit their conduct to judicial investigation, rather than to send forth a statement of that conduct in answer to the attacks which had been made on them out of that house. They thought it better that their defence should be made in that house or before a court of justice. In considering the question now submitted to the house, he was freed from one considerable difficulty. It was not necessary for him, to enter into any argument to show the illegality of the meeting. It was declared on the trial at York to have been illegal; and that decision had since been confirmed by all the judges of the Court of King's Bench, on a motion for a new trial. The trial at York was conducted with the greatest impartiality. The prosecution was led by his learned friend the member for Peterborough, with all that ability for which he was distinguished; and the case was tried before a constitutional judge, who could not be accused of bearing harshly on any defendant who happened to come before him. He felt pleasure in saying the question was tried in the county of York, and the decision

clearly showed that evidence given solemnly on oath removed these unfavourable impressions which the nature of the case was peculiarly calculated to excite. As it was obvious that no statement of his would be much attended to, he should be obliged to trouble the house with depositions and extracts of depositions relative to what occurred at Manchester on and before the 16th of August. He would read them as cursorily as he could, to avoid wasting the time of the house; otherwise he should be glad to read them with full length, in order that the subject might be properly understood. The house would recollect what was the state of the country in the beginning of the year, and particularly in the early part of the summer of 1819. The disposition of the people in the northern manufacturing districts was so well known that, at the Chester quarter session, the magistrates entered into resolutions, binding themselves to exert their best endeavours to preserve the peace. The Sontham grand jury followed their example; and on the 3d of July the King's proclamation, respecting the disturbed state of the country, was issued. About this time the meetings, which had not before been very numerous increased considerably. They increased in proportion to the impunity which they met with. They were all conducted by the same itinerant orators, who went from one meeting to another, and moved a series of resolutions, amongst large bodies of the people, where it was impossible that any discussion could take place. From January to June only one or two meetings were held; but, from the 1st of June to the 16th of August, no less than a dozen were held. These meetings followed the celebrated letter of Mr. Hunt to Lord Sidmouth, reclaiming a petition which he left with him to be presented to the Prince Regent. In that letter he declared “that he would find some other means to make the sentiments of the people known to the Prince Regent.” At the meeting at Oldham, on the 14th of June, there were deputies from 28 places, and their object was to adopt some mode of harmonizing their proceedings. They declared that a government emanating from the free choice of the people could alone give security to the country; and they voted thanks to Wooler, Cobbett, Carlile, and others, who were all invited to attend the meeting of the 9th of August. The meeting of the 9th was called for the purpose of electing a member to represent them in parliament. But a learned counsel having stated his opinion that such a meeting would be illegal, the idea was given up. There was, however, a large procession through the town of Manchester. At this time a number of the magistrates for Cheshire, who were also magistrates for that part of the county of Lancaster, together with some of the Lancashire magistrates, formed a committee, which met frequently at Manchester to devise means for preserving the public peace. That committee called Mr. Hulton to the chair. He was a leading man in the county of Lancaster, and he never knew an individual who possessed a greater portion of humanity and courage. After the 12th of August, a meeting of the people was fixed for the 16th. Their object was to consider a fair and avowed proposition; but, at the same time, strong indications of a desire to riot were observed. The magistrates, therefore, gave directions, that all persons who were willing to undertake the duty, should be sworn in as special constables. Many persons were so sworn in; but a person of the name of Bamford, who was now suffering for his infraction of the law, published a proclamation, threatening those who obeyed the call of the magistrates. This proclamation had the intended effect; and, in the populous place where Bamford resided, only two or three persons could be found who would act as special constables. The loyal part of the population became intimidated, and the training and drilling at night, struck terror into the minds of the well disposed. Before the 16th of August the night drills had greatly increased. They were kept extremely secret. The parties had their private signal; they went out to remote places at 12 or 1 o'clock at night, and they returned home before morning; so that it was morally impossible for the Manchester magistrates to interfere. Two men, named Shawcross and Murray, who watched one of these midnight parties, were discovered by their scouts and beaten most severely. At this period a circular letter was written by Mr. Hunt, in which he stated that he considered the meeting of the 16th to be an adjournment of the meeting of the 9th—the latter, he it remembered, having been called for an illegal purpose, namely, to elect a member to serve in Parliament. He would now proceed to read the depositions of various individuals, to show the impression which those proceedings had made on their minds.

An Hon. MEMBER under the gallery requested the hon. gent. to speak out, as the question was one of great importance. (*order, order.*)

Mr. B. WILBRAHAM proceeded to read the deposition of a person of the name of Yates, who stated the alarm he felt at expressions of a disloyal nature which he had heard several individuals make use of. The next deposition was that of Dr. Butterworth. The hon. member was proceeding to read it, when

Lord MILTON rose to order. He wished to know what the precise nature of those documents was? whether they were depositions taken before a magistrate? or whether they were depositions made in a court of justice where the witnesses were cross examined? (*hear, hear.*)

Mr. B. WILBRAHAM had no hesitation in stating that they were not of the latter description. They were depositions made before the different magistrates by persons who voluntarily offered themselves to state what they saw and heard. He did not wish to give them a higher character than they deserved, but he believed that those who made those depositions swore only that which they were convinced was true. The honorable member then read an extract from Batterworth's deposition, in which a detail was given of the proceedings of a training party at which he was present. John Hale, a day labourer, deposed that, on the fifteenth of August, he went to see the drill at White Moss, and was assaulted by the sergeant and several privates of the party. Thomas Wilkes, of Middleton, a collector of rents, deposed that the wife of one of the persons from whom he demanded rent for his employers, declared that she would pay none. That the Manchester meeting would be settling-day, after which all would be straight. James Richardson, of Manchester, gunsmith, and James Surtees, of Rochdale, constable, deposed that prior to the 16th of August they had heard the people in their respective neighbourhoods make use of every strong expression against government. Captain Watford, of the 15th Dragoons, and an officer of the 51st regiment, quartered at Stockport, deposed that they had met bodies of men going towards Manchester, some of whom said "We shall see Hunt today, and the business will be settled." The hon. gentleman went on to read other depositions, tending to prove, as he observed, what were the impressions which, from various quarters, it was attempted to produce upon the minds of the common people. They also spoke to the fact of large bodies of people who stopped before the Exchange, and gave several shouts of insult; to their formidable aspect, to the array in which they marched, and to a great variety of other particulars. As to the riot act (the hon. gentleman continued), that had been thought proper to be read by the magistrates who consulted together upon the subject; and it was accordingly read by one of them, who was remarkably for a very loud voice, from a window. (*cries of name name.*) It was Mr. Ethelstone. (*hear, hear.*)

Mr. BENNET.—May I ask where is his deposition; Has he ever sworn to this fact of having read the riot act? (*hear.*)

Mr. B. WILBRAHAM said he did not know; but (as we understood him) he had been told so. Another gent., in order that it might be perfectly heard, went down among the people; but was speedily tripped up and trampled on. Much stress, the house was aware, had been laid upon the asserted fact of the riot act's not having been read for a full hour; but then it must be considered what the nature of this meeting was. It was not dispersed because it was professedly a riotous meeting, but because it was a decidedly illegal meeting. (*hear, hear, from the Opposition.*) He admitted that professedly it was not illegal; but it was so in fact and in law. Then the military array in which those who assembled at it proceeded to the spot, and many other circumstances, combined to make it of a very peculiar as well as very formidable nature. It could not, therefore, be considered as a meeting of any known or ordinary character, such as those were which were contemplated by the riot act, at the time of its enactment. The depositions proceeded to show that when Hunt and his party arrived, the warrant was made out. Here he would take the liberty of mentioning to gentlemen who might happen not to be aware of it, what the municipal constitution of Manchester was. It had no corporation, but was governed by a borough-reeve and two constables, each of which officers was invariably chosen from the better classes of the people there. Upon this particular occasion it appeared that the borough-reeve professed his entire conviction that any attempt to serve the warrant without the assistance of the military power, would be very futile and very dangerous. This apprehension of his was confirmed by the opinions of the 2 constables, and finally, in consequence of their representations, the military power was called in. The hon. gent. then read the affidavit of an individual whose name we did not hear, who saw a great many stones thrown during the transactions of that day; although from personal observation he could allege, that before the meeting there were on the field neither stones, sticks, nor bludgeons, nor any other implements that could be used offensively. After the dispersion of the meeting, however, he found both sticks and stones; the former appearing to be some of them hedge-stakes, the others walking sticks. R. Brookes declared in his deposition, that being desired by the borough-reeve, shortly after the meeting was dispersed, to go over the ground, he had found many stones, several of them having all the appearance of having been brought thither, and of having been used for the purpose of throwing at people. J. Barlow deposed to having met on the morning of the 16th several parties armed with sticks and bludgeons. He saw the men standing, twelve feet deep, before the hustings linked arm in arm. He saw stones and brickbats thrown at the yeomanry cavalry; and one man near him (the deponent) struck at a yeoman with a bludgeon or short stick which he carried. The honorable gentleman then read parts of the depositions of George Brown, Samuel Johnson, and another person, who spoke to having seen sticks and stones upon the ground—some of the former being four feet long. It was stated in the deposition of a constable that the military aid being called in, two companies

of yeomanry advanced, preceded by the borough-reeve and two constables. (*hear.*) They marched by files, very slowly, and six abreast. Now, by marching in this manner, it was quite impossible that the yeomanry could then mean any thing hostile; because the two outside men only, of each file, could use their sabres against the people. The depositions asserted that not a blow was struck by the yeomanry till they were themselves assailed by the bludgeons of the populace.

Mr. H. C. BENNET would like very much to hear that particular deposition read, on which it was said that not a blow was struck by the yeomanry till some persons had assailed them with their bludgeons. (*order, order, and cries of hear.*)

Mr. B. WILBRAHAM read the deposition of Joseph Burley, which was to this effect. Another deponent alleged that before a blow was struck by the yeomanry he saw stones and brickbats flying about, directed against them from a variety of quarters; that Captain Burley, when the yeomanry advanced, preceded them about 36 yards, and that many of the constables walked considerably before Captain Burley; he was not certain as to what he had said about the trumpeter, not having seen any thing of it himself but on the return of the yeomanry from the hustings, he saw that considerable confusion prevailed among the meeting. The deposition of — Garrett (an officer, we believe, of the 87th regiment) described the fact of Mr. Hulme, a trooper in the yeomanry, having been knocked off his horse and hurt. The hon. gentleman then observed, that he had much more of this evidence, which he forbore longer to detain the house upon; hoping, however, that by so abridging he was not weakening it. It might very naturally be asked why this evidence was not produced at York, on the trial; and his answer was this. The learned judge, before whom the cause to which he alluded was tried, thought proper to narrow the question (and no doubt with very good reason) solely to the legality or illegality of the meeting which took place at Manchester. This, and no other, was the question which he felt himself called upon to try; and, limited as it was, it occupied 10 days in the hearing. This limitation, which was, as to all points of evidence, strictly enforced, was allowed—with that humane and honorable feeling which is naturally always entertained for persons in similar situations—to operate in favour of the defendants; and much evidence, both of a specific and a collateral nature, in consequence, was not brought forward. There was perhaps another reason why it was not produced. The gentleman—an eminent solicitor—who was sent down to prosecute, did not address himself to the magistrates; but on his arrival at Manchester applied to a professional gentleman of great respectability, but unacquainted with most particulars of the transaction, and not to all connected with the magistrates. What was proved by Mr. Hulton, the only magistrate who was put into the box, was most satisfactorily proved (*hear*); and the jury found a verdict of "guilty" against the defendant, which of course they would not have done had the evidence been of a nature to leave any doubt, on their minds upon its propriety. He did not wish to say any thing invidious on this subject, but he felt that he should not discharge the duty he owed to himself, to the magistracy of the county, and to that house, if he did not call the attention of honorable gentlemen for a few moments to the nature of the evidence. Mr. Carlile, they all knew, was one of the persons summoned to attend the meeting in question. The political and the religious opinions of this person were also well known; and he would put it to any of those who now heard him, and who had any sincere belief in the Christian religion, whether he could believe evidence given, for instance, by Mr. Carlile? Some of those who did give evidence were so far parties concerned, that it could hardly be expected they should candidly declare with what intentions they went to that meeting; while others, as the honorable baronet had said, went there, no doubt, with the best and most innocent intentions in the world. But in such a confused scene, and amidst the tremulous agitation of 50,000 people, it was very obvious that men in giving an account of what they had there beheld, were very liable to be warped and misled by their fears, their prejudices, or their passions. As to the inquiry proposed by the hon. baronet, he thought there were very many objections to the mode of it. They all knew the length to which such examinations ever went. They could not be carried on with that closeness and unremittence with which judicial proceedings were conducted; any the great objection of all was, that they would not be upon oath. (*hear.*) What would be the consequences, if the house acceded to the proposition of the hon. baronet? People would be summoned from all quarters; long investigations would be gone into upon one side, and followed up by as long ones on the other. The hon. member then, advertising to the day of the meeting at Manchester on the 16th, stated that the magistrates had taken all precautions to guard the town against danger; and he produced a placard which had been posted up by them, in which they cautioned all persons to keep their servants, children, and apprentices within doors on that day. (*hear, hear.*) It was said that the magistrates ought to have arrested Hunt before that day; but when this objection was made, it should be considered that the magistrates had no charge against him before then. No act had been done by him before then of which they could take cognizance. Mr. Hunt himself had called

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at their office to know if any charge was against him, and he was answered that there was none: of course they could not have interfered with him. It was also said that the magistrates should have prevented the meeting; but he should wish to know how the passage of a body of 50,000 persons could be stopped. If an attempt of the kind were made by the civil authorities, their power would be set at defiance, as it was afterwards: and he presumed it would not be contended that force should have been resorted to in the first instance; but even if that were the case, they had not a sufficient force. It was next said that they should have waited until some seditious act had been done; but to this he replied, that if time had been given to have the passions of the multitude inflamed by seditious harangues, it might have been found extremely difficult to prevent its effects. The magistrates waited until they had found the leaders fully identified with the multitudes they had collected, and in this he thought they had acted most wisely. If they had waited further until the irregularity of the meeting became more marked, it might have proved too powerful for their utmost efforts to repress. The hon. member then proceeded to contend that the meeting could not have the peaceable intentions which were attributed to them, else why should they have brought sticks out of the ordinary size, and such quantities of stones as he had proved were brought by them to the ground in their pockets? (*hear, hear, from the Opposition.*) As to the charge of their not having tried the civil power, he maintained that they had tried it as far as it could be done without imminent risk. Neither magistrates nor constables were bound to expose themselves unnecessarily, and it was perfectly clear that 300 constables would have been of no avail against the opposition of such a vast force. They had seen an instance of the futility of such an attempt a few evenings before, when a man had been attacked for sticking up a proclamation of the Prince Regent's. The borough-reeves and constables interfered, but they were hemmed in by the mob who began to pelt them; and it was with difficulty they escaped. But they had an example in the employment of a military force on an occasion somewhat similar, and that by an individual who would not be suspected of any violent measures against public meetings: he alluded to the case of the meeting of the Banketeers, as they were called, about four years ago, when Sir John Byng sent the peace-officer, along with the soldiers, who surrounded the leaders of the party, and took them into custody. He had no hesitation in saying, that had the meeting not surrounded the military who were sent among them at Manchester, not a life would have been lost. The magistrates saw that the civil power, as well as the yeomanry, was in danger: added to this, they had the depositions of several respectable inhabitants, who swore that the town was in danger; and they did what they conceived would prevent it—they dispersed the meeting; by which the danger was completely averted; and several other meetings which had been announced in the county were avoided. As to the charge that the troops had stopped up the avenues to prevent the people from escaping, it was completely refuted by the declarations of all the officers of the regular troops who were on duty on that occasion. He now came to the yeomanry cavalry, and he contended that if they had attacked the people, it was only in defence of themselves. They had gone to assist the civil power, when they were assailed by the crowd, and it was natural that they should defend themselves. But it was quite erroneous to say, that many persons had fallen by their hands. That some persons had lost their lives, and that a number were wounded and bruised, was a fact; but he would show that the accounts which attributed all those circumstances to the attacks of the yeomanry were quite erroneous. The honorable member then read to the house a report from the coroner at Manchester of the number of inquests which he had held after the 16th, in order to show that many of the cases which were said to have occurred by wounds at St. Petersfield were cases of accidental death. The first of these was on a woman who was said to have been cut down at the meeting; but by the coroner's inquest it appeared that her death was accidental. She had come to the meeting, apparently very zealous for its object, and was heard to express a wish at a house where she stopped to drink, that she might not return alive if the good cause did not carry the day. In the pressure of the crowd she fell into an area and was killed; and the verdict of the coroner's jury was given accordingly. Another inquest was on an infant which had died of convulsions through fright. The hon. member mentioned other inquests which had been held by the Manchester coroner, between the 16th of August and the month of November; in none of which, he observed, did it appear, except in one case, that the party had died of sabre wounds: the most of them were accidental deaths, arising in many instances from circumstances not connected with the meeting. One of those cases was that of a man said to have been killed at Peterloo, as it was called, but who actually met his death whilst eating some mutton, a piece of which stuck in his throat. With respect to the reports of the numbers said to have been taken into the infirmary, they were, he added equally erroneous; and it was also without foundation that a man had been turned out of the infirmary because he had been one of those who attended the meeting. The reports of many said to have been killed were equally without foundation in fact. As a proof of this, and of the avidity with which such stories were believed, he would mention one or

two cases. The first was, that of a father who went to the Infirmary to seek for his son (as it was reported), and seeing some clothes in one of the rooms, he declared that they were the clothes of his son, and thence concluded that he had been murdered, and that his body was disposed of. Now he (Mr. Wilbraham) had an affidavit from the son himself (*laughter*) a young man about 19 years old, which stated that he had not been at the meeting, had not been wounded, and never was in the infirmary in his life, (*hear*). Several other cases he could mention, but he did not wish to detain the house. One case he could not avoid stating; it was that of a man named John Nichol, who was said to have set off for the meeting on the morning of the 16th, but who was not afterwards heard of. It was of course concluded that he had been killed; and it was added that the agony of his wife and four children was not to be described. Now he had an affidavit from that person himself, from which it appeared that he had left his home to go to Manchester, not on the 16th, but on the 14th, and having been detected in stealing 28 lbs. of tobacco, was committed to the New Bailey, where he remained on the 16th, and of course could not have attended the meeting, (*hear, hear*). From these few statements the house might judge of the nature of many of the assertions which had been made respecting the list of the killed. As to the number said to have been wounded, he believed they were greatly exaggerated, and that many persons showed wounds and bruises said to have been received on the 16th, to which they were induced by the premiums for wounds offered by the committee. He knew one case of a man who had received 4l. for a wound, which he said he had got on the 16th, but which he afterwards confessed was occasioned by a nail which had run up through his foot, (*cries of name, name.*) He could not at that moment call the name of this person to mind (*hear*); but he could assure the house that he had not stated anything which he did not believe, (*hear, hear.*) He hoped he had now answered the charges brought against the magistrates and the cavalry: if he had not, it certainly was not from want of materials or the weakness of the case. But if he had not succeeded in defending them, let the house recollect the difference of their situation then, and that of the house at present. The house was now, after a lapse of nearly two years, debating upon the propriety of that conduct, of which they (the magistrates and cavalry) had had but a few minutes to consider. The house was now certain that the danger was all over; they had to decide in a moment of fear and alarm; he did not speak of personal fear, but of alarm for the safety of the town. The honorable member then read an extract of an address to the Prince Regent, signed by 8,000 inhabitants of Manchester, in which (as we understood) they approved of the conduct of the magistrates, and described the danger in which they considered the town to have been placed. This he did to show that the feeling of danger was not confined to the magistrates alone. The honorable member contended that to institute an inquiry at the bar of that house would be to cast an imputation where none was deserved. He cautioned the house against thus creating a new crime for which the common or statute law was not sufficient; for if the laws could take cognizance of such things, why had not the parties enforced them. He thought the laws were sufficient, and he thought they ought to be suffered to take their course. In conclusion the hon. member quoted a passage from the speech of Lord Grenville upon this subject in the House of Lords, in which his lordship had pointed out what would be the situation of the country if magistrates, after having discharged an arduous duty, were to find no protection, but he left exposed to groundless suspicion and harassing trial. (*The honorable Member sat down amidst cries of hear, from the ministerial benches.*)

Lord MILTON next addressed the house, but for some time was wholly inaudible in the gallery from the low tone in which he spoke. We understood him, after some time, to say that the house had nothing to do with the character or talents of his hon. friend [Mr. Wilbraham], but with the case which he had made out and with that which had been attempted to be made against him: and he thought that case would have been better if he had not made the allusions which he had indulged in towards the close of his speech, respecting the power of the house in making that a crime which was not so before. His hon. friend had spoken of the testimony of some of the witnesses at Hunt's trial, and stated that one of them, Barlow, had spoken in his affidavit before the magistrates of the quantity of stones and brickbats which were on the ground. Now it was singular that this person had never mentioned a word of this in his evidence at York. (*hear, hear.*) How could his account on both occasions have been so different if he had spoken the truth in either? (*hear.*) How could such facts as were said to have been sworn to before the magistrates by this witness have escaped the sagacity of his hon. and learned friend (Mr. Scarlett) who had conducted the case? There was another witness (Dunthorpe, we believe) who had in his depositions said, that he heard one of the persons going to the meeting, declare that they would come in such force as to overcome all the civil and military authorities; but the person who it was sworn had said this was Wilde, one of the accused. At the trial in York, the learned judge—a judge, of whom he never thought or spoke but with love and veneration (*loud cheers*), from what he knew of him both in a public and private character—had said that there was no evidence against Wilde. Would there have been no evidence if

Dunthorpe had been examined? (*hear, hear.*) Would there have been none if Miller and others had there sworn what the honorable gentleman had now referred to as their testimony? But if those persons had been called, their cross-examination might have gone to negative the facts which they were now cited to prove. (*hear, hear, hear.*) These were considerations of great importance in reference to this question—a question which, in his humble opinion, never could be set at rest till it should be set at rest by the investigation of parliament (*cheers*);—a question which was, as the hon. bart. had said, of dimensions too large for any inferior tribunal—a question which might have been exaggerated on the one side, but which was brought down too low on the other side (*hear, hear*)—a question which affected not individuals only, but the law and constitution of the country. (*cheers.*) That was the view which he took of the question. He left out of his consideration entirely the conduct and character of Mr. Hunt, whose petition, vilifying all the sacred authorities of the land, had this night been read in that house. If his character should be mixed with the meetings, characters totally dissimilar would be mixed. All he cared for was, that no precedent should be established by the non-interference of Parliament to lead to military instead of civil authority being resorted to in this country. (*cheers.*) It would be recollected that the judge had, at the trial, told over and over again that the magistrates and yeomanry were not before the court. The question before the court had been, whether the accused had been guilty of a conspiracy, whether the meeting was legal, or whether it was riotous. Therefore, the cause at issue between the magistrates and the military on the one hand, and the people of England on the other, had not yet been tried. (*loud cheers.*) Although he might concede that the numbers injured, and the injuries received, were exaggerated, yet the honorable member could not deny that the transactions of such a day were not unworthy of the examination of parliament. He would push down the case to the lowest level which even the honorable gentleman could desire: he would say that only 57 had been wounded, and that only one single individual had died in consequence of a sabre wound, in circumstances which did not admit of redress being given in inferior tribunals. Why even then was it not the duty of the house, as the grand inquest of the nation, to interfere? (*cheers.*) The magistrates, he believed, were not the party most to blame. Mr. Hulton he believed on that point. He did not mean to say that he did not believe him on other points; but he believed his evidence that it had been the determination of the magistrates not to interfere. He (Lord Milton) wished they had adhered to that determination; he wished they had the power to adhere to it. When the military had rushed in, he doubted whether they had been authorized by the magistrates. (*hear.*) He doubted it because the riot act had not been read then, if it had been read at all. If it had been read, why had not evidence of that fact been given at Mr. Hunt's trial? How much time that fact, once proved, would have saved to the judge and to the jury in inquiring into the legality or illegality of the meeting. No man could see the charge of the learned judge without seeing that the judge's own mind had not been made up on that point, and without being rather of opinion that Mr. Justice Bayley had expected the acquittal of all the defendants. (*hear, hear.*) Five had been acquitted; with respect to whom there had been direct evidence that they had been at the meeting. If then the meeting had been illegal, they who were proved to have been present were as much guilty as Hunt, Johnson, and Knight: they had also been found guilty of having by previous conspiracy contrived the meeting; they had been connected with what had been termed revolutionary emblems, as much as the others. The nature of the verdict showed distinctly that neither the judge nor the jury thought that any, in consequence of having been present, should be found guilty. He had, therefore, a right to assume that the whole meeting was innocent, except five persons who had been found guilty of conspiracy. The proceedings of that day, if not inquired into, would do more to loosen the bonds which bound the higher and lower orders together than had ever been done by any committee of that house. He called upon the house to interfere for the sake of the magistracy throughout the country; he called upon them for the sake of gentlemen who acted as yeomanry to inquire into this proceeding, and to ascertain whether the magistracy and yeomanry through the country were to regard it as an example to be followed in other places. They might think that there would not be occasion in other places; but the example here set, and the thanks given by the government, formed an encouragement for a certain mode of acting. He called therefore on the house to show the military and yeomanry how they ought to conduct themselves in other cases. The resolutions at York had never declared the illegality of the meeting. He admitted that a very eloquent gent. in that house had put that construction upon them: but that had not been intended; and he would appeal to gentlemen in that house, whether it had not been intended that no opinion should be given at the Yorkshire meeting upon that point. He had never formed his opinion respecting it; but whether the meeting had been legal or illegal, the dispersion of it had been illegal, and called for the interference of parliament. (*cheers.*) He had now, however, formed a decided opinion that the meeting had been

peaceable. He drew that inference from the documents of the hon. gent.—from the evidence in the trial, not Mr. Hunt's evidence, but from the evidence against him; for from the evidence for the crown he could draw the conclusion that there was nothing riotous or turbulent in the meeting. It had been proved that they had come by dozens and scores with their wives and daughters, 15 miles distance to the meeting. Was it really because they had had so great a force that they brought their wives and daughters? Armies, they knew, were accompanied by the wives and daughters of many; but who had ever heard of their having taken them with them to battle? Yet if his hon. friend's statements were true, they had come to this meeting in expectation of a battle. Having such an expectation, would they have come with their wives and children? (*hear.*) If any thing could prove it, that proved the meeting to be peaceable. But the peaceable inhabitants were said to have been alarmed. There was evidence to that effect; but there was evidence against it. Mr. Shuttleworth proved the direct contrary; and his evidence was as good at least as that of any on the other side. But at the meeting a great many had been present from curiosity, and many who were hostile to the meeting. At the trial at York Mr. Justice Bayley had said—and he begged attention to that—that he would ultimately tell the jury that there was no evidence without Nadin, that the military were necessary. Why then had he not been called; He had been at York; and, what was more, Mr. Hay had been at York; and, what was more, Mr. Ethelstone had been at York; and, what was more still, Mr. Hay and Mr. Ethelstone left York after the trial had begun. (*hear hear.*) It was only stated that Nadin had refused to attempt to execute the warrant. That could only prove that Nadin and those who used him, had an inclination for other force, which was in fact called in. Mr. Stanley had been present where the magistrates were, and had the same means of seeing; yet he said that from the moment the cavalry entered he saw swords rising and falling; but he added (which showed the candour of his mind), whether the flat or sharp side struck, he could not tell. He would not be told that this was not regular evidence, for it was at least as good as the evidence on the other side. (*loud cheers.*) Persons in the meeting might have had heated imaginations, strange notions of parliamentary reform, strange notions of the division of property; but that was not proved, and could not be a justification of the violent dispersion. It was therefore incumbent on the house to institute some inquiry into the transaction. In conclusion, he thought there was a danger of too great a concentration of power in one branch of the state. If the balance should be preserved, if the crown and the higher orders should have their rights, and the lower classes their liberties, it was the duty of the house to interfere. If they would not, they would create an indelible conviction among the people, that whatever attacks might be made on them, the House of Commons, which was particularly their own house, would not interfere for them, but be subservient to the power and authority of others. If the house meant to show that they took any concern in the interests of the people, they would give redress if they would not, the bonds which bound society together would be loosened to an alarming degree. (*hear.*)

Sir ROBERT WILSON and Mr. WILMOT presented themselves at once; but some voices on the ministerial side calling for Mr. Wilmot, Sir Robert Wilson gave way.

Mr. WILMOT thought that the question could be more deliberately and more safely tried on narrower grounds, than it could be tried in that house. From long acquaintance with Mr. Hulton, he was certain that he could have had no intention but the beneficial exercise of a public duty. He regretted to see so many petitions presented, because they detailed misfortunes; and because, if the magistrates exercised a sound discretion, casualties were not to make an inquiry necessary. At this distance of time he would not follow the example of the honorable baronet, who, not in covert imputations, not in ambiguous expressions, had charged the government with having promoted the proceeding with ulterior views. An hon. gentleman, superior to the hon. bart. in talents, learning, and character, had said that none could have the folly to suspect government of such conduct. Could political feeling so blind common sense as to lead any man to believe that government could be deliberately guilty of what would be the lowest degradation of the human character? (*cheers from the Ministerial benches.*) There were other means of instituting an inquiry into the transactions—means which had been most mysteriously neglected. But they must not leave out of view the circumstances which preceded the unfortunate meeting. There had been 3 meetings from Jan. to June, and 14 from June to Aug. The people had been the prey of agitators; they had been deluded in the most base and wicked manner. Their privations had been described as the consequence of the form of government, and they had been told if they would only act as one man, they would be put in a very different situation. (*cheers.*) These were all the ingredients and characteristics of incipient treason. The meeting of the 16th was declared by Hunt to be an adjournment of the illegal meeting called for the 9th. It was not so, however, in fact; and there was no ground for apprehending Hunt pre-

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viciously. But when 18 flags and 5 caps of liberty were exhibited, the circumstances became very different. He could not have supposed such a misinterpretation of law as would find that meeting legal; and, in addition, there was now the positive verdict of a jury. It had been impossible to carry the warrant into effect without the military. He had no doubt that that was the fact. When the magistrates had ordered the military, did it follow that they had foreseen the consequences which followed? Such was the state of affairs up to the time when the magistrates gave orders for the military to interfere. It was not fair for the house to lose sight of that point, nor to separate it from the vague apprehensions of danger which at that time pervaded every man's mind. The noble lord had said, that up to the moment of which he was now speaking, the meeting was peaceable and orderly. He would allow that to a certain degree the meeting was at peace; but it was the peace of a thunderstorm (*loud cries of hear from the Opposition benches*), uncertain whether it would pass away or burst with violence over the town of Manchester. If the men who gave the order for the military to interfere were in their general conduct men of character and of humanity, it was only fair to suppose that they had acted under an overpowering sense of duty in giving that order. The satisfaction which Lord Sidmouth had expressed at their conduct did not imply that ministers rejoiced in the miseries which had fallen upon some of their countrymen, but that they rejoiced in finding that they had a magistracy who had courage to perform their duty in the midst of danger and difficulty, even at the risk of their personal reputation. The hon. bart. had stated that it was a fearful responsibility which the magistrates had undertaken; and had reminded the house of a passage of Scripture, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Could the hon. bart. mean to say that the blood shed upon this occasion was not shed by the sword of justice? The blood that was shed on that occasion, if it was shed by the magistrates in the exercise of a sound discretion, was nothing more than the exercise of justice on an extended scale. (*loud cries of hear from the Opposition, and repeated by the Ministerial benches.*)

Mr. DENMAN should be well content to leave the question as stated by the hon. member for Westminster, and by his noble friend the member for Yorkshire; for, notwithstanding what had fallen from the two other gentlemen who had taken part in the debate, he could not conceive that the house did not feel astonishment at the alliance preserved by his Majesty's ministers, against whom such grave charges had been brought, and had been allowed to remain unreluted. The hon. member for Dover had stated that it might be possible that in the alarm of the moment the magistrates had committed certain acts which required apology. To that plea he should have had no objection; but it was not now a question of apology, but of praise—not a question of indulgence, but of reward. Another honorable gentleman had said that the individuals who had suffered on the 16th of August were to be considered as having suffered under the sword of justice. (*loud cries of hear.*) If such doctrines were not immediately reprobated, all the magistrates who were warned and encouraged by his harangue would go into the country with that sword in their hands, and sheath it in the bodies of their countrymen, whenever a questionable meeting was in their neighbourhood, and they had a military force to back their interference. (*loud cheers.*) With regard to the Manchester massacre, he considered it to be an event, which was more deserving of compassion, than of being held up to the courts as an example, worthy of imitation. He offered the magistrates who acted on that unfortunate occasion his compassion for having been made the instruments for the slaughter of their fellow countrymen, but withheld from them his praise. He feared little whether the depositions which the hon. member had read, were made at the time, when they were said to have been made, or whether the riot act had been read to the multitude, because they had not been put in evidence at the trial at York. If the government could have proved those circumstances, he had no doubt they would; for he could not for a moment admit the excuse made for the learned judge, who had presided at that trial, that he, to prevent a waste of time, had not allowed those questions to be gone into. One objection made to an investigation by the house on a former occasion was that the riot, and all the circumstances regarding it, would be proved upon the trial. The trial had now taken place, and no such riot was proved; and yet even now those assertions of riot were reiterated upon nameless affidavits sworn before no proper authority, subjected to no cross-examination, and in which no indictment for Perjury could lie. It was stated on a former occasion, that it was not right to take any step that might prejudice the case, as if the thanks of the Regent and the declared congratulations of his ministers had not rendered it almost impossible to obtain a fair trial. Nay, even the Attorney and Solicitor-General had been employed in the Court of King's Bench to resist the reasonable application of Mr. Hunt to have his trial removed from a county where the very magistrates whose conduct was in question, might sit as jurymen upon his case. There was a want of candour stating that his hon. friend had unnecessarily put off the important question: he had put it off, it was true; but it was because new interests had grown up daily, and because

the present deeds of ministers always succeeded in profligacy their past especially in the last year, when they effaced the recollection of all their past deeds, and even of all ministers who had preceded them, by the prosecution in which they were engaged. (*loud cheering.*) They mistook the character of the people of England, if they thought that they did not feel the injury which they then suffered, because they did not loudly express their sense of it. The less they said regarding it, the more they felt. But it was said, that the House of Commons was not a fit place to inquire into this subject. What! the House of Commons not a fit place to inquire whether the right of petition had been infringed! And why was it not so? Because (it was said) as soon as it entered into any inquiry, it disgraced itself. And when was it, and to whom that this argument was urged? It was urged by ministers to a House of Commons which had been ready to engage in an inquiry into the conduct of a persecuted female—a deserted wife—to a House of Commons that had been ready to sweep Germany of its pimps and panders to destroy a woman whom the people had saved from the ruin which that house was but too ready to inflict upon her. (*confusion, and cries of hear.*) Were they ready to engage in that dirty domestic investigation, and to refuse inquiry to the case of the people of England. (*cries of hear.*) Some people thought that enough had been said upon this unfortunate affair, and that it ought now to be forgotten altogether. If it could have been forgotten from the first, he should have been happy; but it could not be forgotten: for the government had revived the memory of it for their own purposes. They had prosecuted his hon. friend; and when various opportunities had occurred of letting that prosecution sleep, they had persevered through all its stages, even though one of the judges had declared that the trial had taken place in a county where the Court had no jurisdiction. The hon. member concluded by stating, that the country, if the house steadily refused all inquiry, would be convinced that it was playing the game of those who wished to degrade and destroy it. (*cries of hear.*)

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL denied that the proceedings at Manchester had taken place under the authority of government: they knew nothing of them till they were over. He defended himself and the Attorney-General for having opposed the charge of venue in Hunt's case, on the ground that they conceived that their consent to his application would have been casting an unjust imputation on the county of Lancaster. He then went at great length into the circumstances of the Manchester meeting, for the purpose of showing that, from the previous state of the country, connected with the appearance of that meeting, the magistrates must have felt great alarm, and consequently were justified in the strong measures which they took for the preservation of the public peace. He conceived that no just imputation had been made against either magistrates or military; or that, if any ground of imputation, the proper course was to apply to the course of justice for inquiry and redress. He accused the hon. bart. of postponing this case till it was almost too late to discuss it, and complained that he had brought it forward at the end of the third session since the event, when an effectual inquiry was impossible.

Mr. PHILIPS (of Manchester) said he should not have taken part in this debate, had he not resided at the place where the transactions occurred, and had he not studiously avoided giving an opinion on the subject when it was last before the notice of the house. Although the state of the country was disturbed, yet justice required him to admit that the general expectation there was, that the meeting of the 16th of August would pass off peaceably, unless it was disturbed by the magistracy; and he had been assured on the best evidence that such was the fact, though after the charge of the yeomanry the utmost confusion and disorganization prevailed. After an eulogium on the character of the Rev. Mr. Stanley, who happened to be present, the honorable gentleman read a letter from him, relating to the events of the 16th August, and to a narrative he had given of them. It was decidedly Mr. Stanley's opinion, that the warrants might have been executed without the aid of the military: he also spoke in his narrative most decisively as to the ill treatment Mr. Hunt had received, and to the cruelty of the military to the mob. Mr. Stanley added, that as far as his observation went, the representation of the transactions in *The Times* newspaper was correct. Such were the principal features of the relation the hon. member had received from Mr. Stanley. As far as he (Mr. Philips) had been able to ascertain, the people had armed themselves but little before the 16th of August: if arms were discovered anterior to that date, he believed that they had been deposited by spies and informers. (*hear.*)

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL said, across the table, that two trials and convictions showed that the people had prepared arms in large quantities before the 16th of August.

Mr. PHILIPS continued—He was very ready to admit that after the 16th August the people armed themselves very extensively, with a view to their own protection; but he still contended that they had not armed themselves in any large numbers before the meeting, when their peaceable proceedings were disturbed by the yeomanry. To this day it was unknown who had ordered them to advance; this of itself deserved investigation; and the whole case for the sake of the liberties and

security of the people demanded inquiry. With regard to the rejection of bills by the grand jury of Lancashire, he meant to cast no reflection upon the members of that body; but in reflecting on the grounds on which they might have thrown out the indictments, it was but fair to take into consideration the state of parties and political feeling in the county. From their influence it could not be expected that grand jurors would be altogether exempt. Many doubts had existed with regard to the legality of the meeting; and if it were illegal, they might entertain an opinion that these who had been present were liable for the consequences of attending it, and ought not to be the prosecutors of bills to punish those who had inflicted injuries among them. He did not say that such had been the ground on which the decision of the grand jury had proceeded; but it did not seem at all improbable that some such notion might have operated upon them. Upon the whole view of the case, without entering more at large into it at this late hour, he thought the motion of the hon. baronet highly expedient.

When the hon. gent. resumed his seat, the cries of "question" became general.

Mr. B. WILBRAHAM explained in a low tone as to some misinterpretation of what had fallen from him.

Sir R. WILSON moved that this debate be adjourned until to-morrow. (no, no: question: adjourn.)

The SPEAKER put the question, that the debate be adjourned till to-morrow (May 16).

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER made a single remark, not audible in the confusion of the house; after which the motion for an adjournment of the debate was carried without a division.

The other orders of the day were gone through: afterwards, the house adjourned at THREE o'CLOCK.

Scots Military Chaplains.

LIEUT.-COL. GORDON AND THE REV. MR. GILLESPIE.

The following is a copy of a Letter from James Gordon, Esq. of Culvennan, Lieut.-Colonel Commandant of the Kirkcudbright Gentleman Yeomanry Cavalry, to the Rev. William Gillespie, Minister of Kells, and late Chaplain to that Corps:—

To the Rev. Wm. Gillespie, Minister of Kells

Sir,

The Lord Advocate has pronounced an Award in the Submission betwixt you and me to his Lordship, dated the 12th instant, bearing the following Findings:—

"I find that the said James Gordon, having deemed it disrespectful to his Majesty's Order in Council, and otherwise inexpedient, that the Queen should be prayed for *nominatim* in the course of Divine Service, when the same should be performed in presence of the said Corps of Yeomanry Cavalry, assembled on permanent duty in quarters, under his command, did, on the 11th day of July 1820, address a letter to the said William Gillespie, which, after mentioning that Colonel Gordon understood that either a public or a private agreement subsisted among the members of the Presbytery to pray on all public occasions for her Majesty, proceeds thus:—'I consider it my duty to request you will inform (inform me) whether you shall consider it as incumbent on you to pray for her Majesty by the style of Queen, when preaching before the Regiment on the 30th current.' I find, that instead of giving an explicit answer to this letter, so as to have put it in Colonel Gordon's power to dispense with Mr. Gillespie's attendance on the occasion, if that should have been deemed advisable, Mr. Gillespie did write to Colonel Gordon, saying, 'Your supposition that there has been either a public or private agreement entered into by the members of the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright to pray on public occasions for her Majesty, &c., I own surprises me, as I assure you no such agreement was ever dreamed of or proposed. It has not been generally considered by the Presbytery as at all a matter of conscience, whether the Queen should be mentioned *nominatim* in prayer, or in the general terms *merely*, in which it is allowed by all parties that she is included.—Some, therefore, pray for her by including the word "*Queen*" and some by omitting it. You are aware also that we who are Ministers must subscribe the oaths to Government as well as you who are Civil and Military Officers; and as you know I yield to no subject of his Majesty in my attachment to my King and country, I trust you shall find me, on all public and private occasions, acting according to the best of my apprehensions, agreeably to the laws of the Land and those of the Church.' I find, that from the tenor of this letter, Col. Gordon was fairly entitled to infer that Mr. Gillespie did not mean to take a step which he had thus been made aware would be disagreeable to his Commanding Officer; especially when, according to his own statement, no point of conscience was at all

considered as involved in the question: I find, that notwithstanding of this Mr. Gillespie did, without any further communication with Colonel Gordon on the subject, pray for the Queen *nominatim*, when officiating exclusively* before said Corps, on the 30th July, 1820. I find that Colonel Gordon (who was absent on this occasion, in consequence of family indisposition), did on his return to quarters on the same day, intimate to Mr. Gillespie that he must consider himself as under arrest, though not subject to personal confinement; I find, that by a letter addressed to the said Mr. Gillespie, dated 30th July, 1820, Colonel Gordon explained, 'that the arrest which Colonel Gordon imposed was not close arrest, but only that he would consider himself as under arrest until further instructions, and that he (Mr. Gillespie) is at liberty to go where he pleases not out of the country.' I find, that although the permanent duty for which the corps was assembled terminated on the 31st day of July, 1820, the foresaid arrest remained in force till the 28th of August thereafter, when it was removed in consequence of a communication from the Lord Lieutenant of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. I find, that the step so taken by Colonel Gordon was contrary to law, indiscreet in its nature, and ought not to have been adopted: but find that there are no grounds whatever for considering Colonel Gordon as having been in any respect influenced by personal feelings to Mr. Gillespie, and that he appears to have been solely actuated by a mistaken sense of his public duty. I find, that while Mr. Gillespie, by the manner in which he replied to Colonel Gordon's letter of the 11th of July, furnished some excuse for that Gentleman's inconsiderate conduct, the step so taken by Colonel Gordon was calculated deeply to affect Mr. Gillespie's feelings, as inferring that he was a disobedient Officer, or not a Loyal man. I find, that there appear to be no grounds for imputing either of these charges to Mr. Gillespie, and that, when his whole conduct is considered, that Reverend Gentleman is fully entitled to be viewed as a true and loyal subject, firmly attached to his King and Country, and warmly interested in the welfare of that military establishment of which he then formed a part. Therefore, and on consideration of the whole circumstances of the case, I ordain the said James Gordon, within fourteen days from the date of my subscribing these Presents, to address a Letter to Mr. Gillespie, reciting the several findings contained in this award, and stating, that as the step which he took in putting Mr. Gillespie under arrest, though induced by no improper motive, has been found to be illegal and indiscreet, he now desires to express his regret for having had recourse to the same, and begs that Mr. Gillespie will consider him as having now said whatever may be deemed wanting, either to soothe those unpleasant feelings which the inconsiderate measure alluded to was so much calculated to excite, or to do away every implied sentiment of disrespect towards the Order to which Mr. Gillespie belongs."

As required by the terms of the Lord Advocate's award, I now address this letter to you, reciting the several findings contained in the award, and stating, that as the step which I took in putting you under arrest, though induced by no improper motive, has been found to be illegal and indiscreet, I now desire to express my regret for having had recourse to the same, and beg that you will consider me as having now said whatever may be deemed wanting either to soothe those unpleasant feelings which the inconsiderate measure alluded to was so much calculated to excite, or to do away every implied sentiment of disrespect towards the Order to which you belong.—I remain, Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

Hackhill, 26th February, 1821.

JAMES GORDON, Lt.-Col

* Mr. Gillespie did not officiate *exclusively* before the Kirkcudbright Gentleman Yeomanry Cavalry on the occasion alluded to. He preached before the usual congregation attending the Established Church of Kirkcudbright, as well as the military corps then and there assembled on permanent duty.

Ship Launch.

(From a Correspondent.)

Was launched from Messrs. Richardson and Co's. Yard, at Sn'kea, yesterday, at half past one o'clock, a beautiful copper fastened Ship of 387 Tons. She went off in the finest style, and was named the *John Adam*, in compliment, we understand, to the worthy Member of Council of that name. The *John Adam*, in point of beauty and architecture, has not been surpassed by any other Ship built in this Port, and reflects the highest credit on the Builder.

Births.

At Barrackpore, on the 10th instant, the Lady of Captain Dacre, of the 1st Battalion 12th Regiment of Native Infantry, of a Son.

At Chittagong, on the 26th ultimo, the Lady of Captain E. Browne, of the 30th Regiment of Native Infantry, of a Son.